The Saturday Review of Literature

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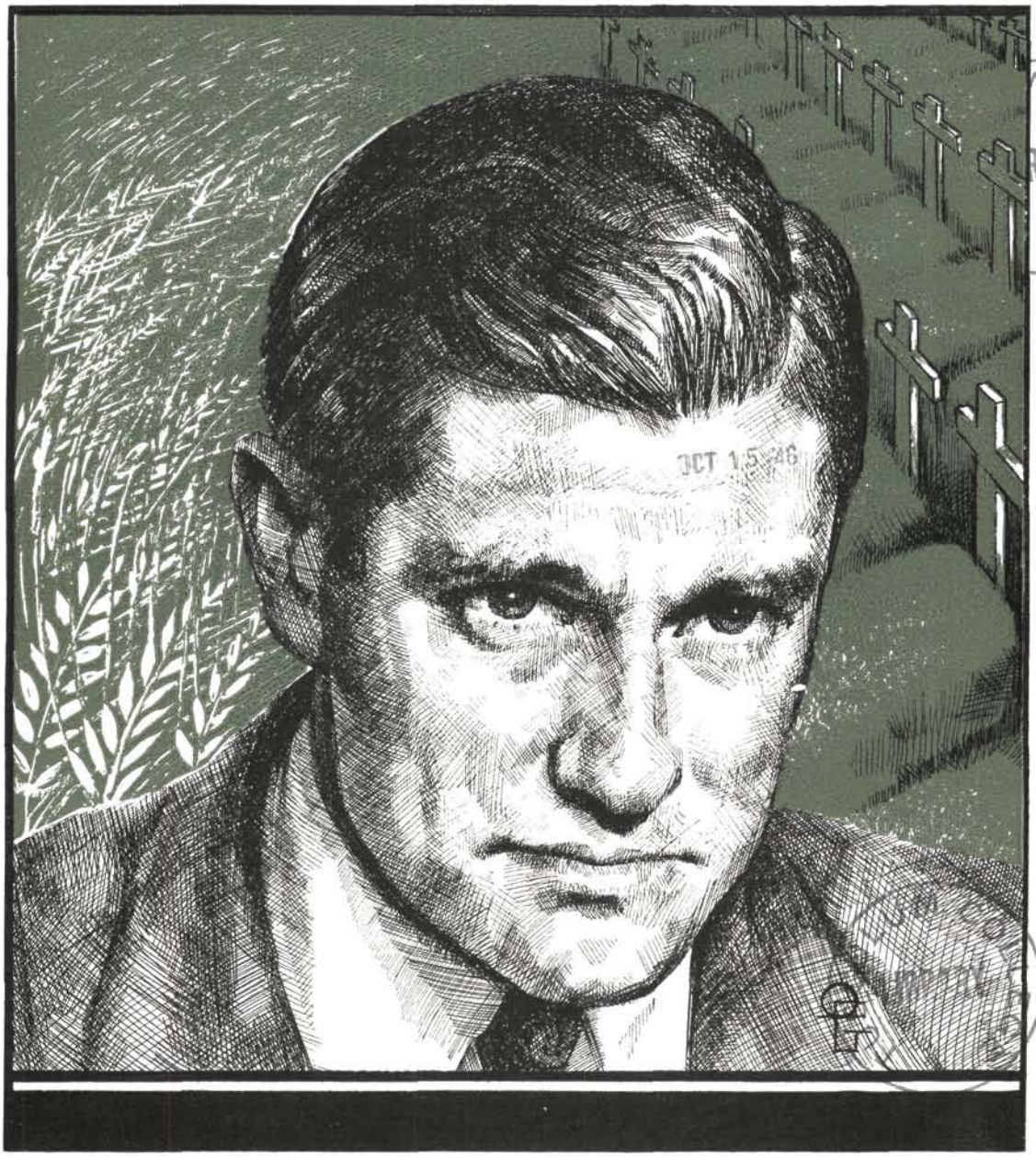

Eric Sevareid, author of "Not So Wild a Dream." (See page 23)

FALL BOOK NUMBER

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Island IN THE ATLANTIC

by Waldo Frank. ISLAND IN THE ATLANTIC is the story of Jonathan Hartt and Evan Cleeve, two boys who meet in the panic and nightmare of the bloody Draft Riots of 1863—two very different young men who grow to maturity in the life of its pages. It is a story of New York in its most colorful, most exciting era—the changing scene of New York through fifty years of its flowering. "It is actually a novel about the main currents of American life during that period. It is also a narrative of ideas, a psychological document, a social manifesto, and a drama of good and evil. And it is almost sure to be attacked on one or another of these grounds while a dozen slighter novels are praised to the skies."—Maxwell Geismar, *N. Y. Herald Tribune.* ¶ "It is a combination of accurate history, sound sociology and emotional artistry as rare as it is exciting."—Ted Robinson, *Cleveland Plain Dealer.* ¶ "A superb masterpiece, a symphonic whole, by a great American writer."—Yandray Wilson Vance, *Hartford Courant.* $3.00 AT ALL BOOKSTORES

DUELL, SLOAN AND PEARCE

THE Great CHALLENGE

by Louis Fischer. "This is an *important* book because it is a *wise* and objective book . . . His is a broad vision; he has repeatedly visited Europe, the Near East, Asia, South America, the U. S. A. There is much of personal experience here; interviews and conversations with key men the world over. At times one disagrees—at times agrees—*always one is stimulated.* It is a book to make us study our prejudices and inform our opinions."—*Virginia Kirkus.* ¶ "He urges the democracies to adopt bold social reforms, to expand political and economic opportunities for colonial peoples, in short, to practice what we preach. His confession of faith will provoke widespread controversy. But his deep-seated belief in the essential soundness and potential perfectibility of democracy carries inspiration at a time when the world is groping through the morass of post-war bickering toward some higher ground on which to build the foundations of a stable and morally acceptable international community."—Vera Micheles Dean, *N. Y. Times.* $4.00

AT ALL BOOKSTORES

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Critics and readers join in praising this "delicately lovely novel"

MAY SARTON'S *The Bridge of Years* is one of those rare novels, full of hope in human beings that is warmly recommended by one reader to another until its fame becomes nation-wide. Here is some of the praise for May Sarton's distinguished and appealing novel.

• **It takes time and talent** to produce a book like May Sarton's THE BRIDGE OF YEARS, and the measure of that talent is the distinction of the final product. It is a distinction of style and subject, developed with care."—*Boston Globe.*

• **Speaks with assurance** and a poet's sensitiveness."
—*Hartford Times.*

• **Achieves an effectiveness** that is rarely found in the current crop of novels."—*Knoxville News Sentinel.*

• **Distinguished by its honesty** and its broad plane of inquiry."
—*New York Times.*

• **Intelligent family novel,** quietly written, penetrating, absorbing."—*Nashville Banner.*

"**A modern and very beautiful Pilgrim's Progress** of a whole family, achieved in no faraway terrain of a seventeenth century mystic's imagination but in the real and sordid world of Europe 1919-1940."—*N. Y. Herald Tribune.*

"**A cleanly, profound, beautiful book** written in that self-effacing style which is the best of all styles; how beautiful it is not my province to say, but yours to discover."
—*Chicago Sun.*

. . . and readers

• **I was deeply satisfied** after reading about Melanie and her way of life . . . To say that THE BRIDGE OF YEARS possesses charm, distinction, and vitality is to do it less than justice."—*from a school principal in Summit, N. J.*

"**What struck me most about it** was its quality of—forgive the word—sweetness. Those marvelous children and that perfectly natural home and all the spontaneous affection—dear Heaven, it was like coming to some sunny meadow."
—*from Baltimore.*

"**I luxuriated in your book,** because its beauty and its sensitivity and at the same time its strength and immediacy were a welcome relief from the sensationalism and sensuality of all the novels I've read in years."—*from Providence, R. I.*

"**It is warm, human, and alive** and constantly interesting. I really loved it and want to thank you for having written it."—*from an actress.*

"**A very fine work . . .** fine in literary texture, fine in its quality of characterization, fine in its tone and philosophy."—*from an American Captain just back from France.*

"**Your people remind me of Willa Cather's women —** and somehow the whole tone and quality of your book is not unlike her."—*from a young married woman in Richmond.*

THE BRIDGE OF YEARS

by May Sarton

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DOUBLEDAY

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The Saturday Review of Literature

Fall Book Number

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FEATURES

PAGE

PORTRAIT OF A MISANTHROPE, by Clifton Fadiman....11
WARTS AND ALL, by Hesketh Pearson....13
FIFTY GUIDES TO AMERICAN CIVILIZATION, by Howard Mumford Jones....15
PREVIEWS: "B. F.'s DAUGHTER," by John P. Marquand....17
"J. B. YEATS," edited by Joseph Hone....19
ALMANAC FOR FALL READING, by Amy Loveman....21
GEO-METRIC VERSE, by Gerald Lynton Kaufman....22

REVIEWS

BOOK	AUTHOR	REVIEWER
NOT SO WILD A DREAM	Eric Sevareid	*Elmer Davis*....23
WHERE ARE WE HEADING?	Sumner Welles	*Thomas K. Finletter*.25
NEWTON DEMANDS THE MUSE	Marjorie Hope Nicolson	*Eric Bentley*....26
THE GREAT CHALLENGE	Louis Fischer	*Edgar Ansel Mowrer*....27
RECONQUEST: ITS RESULTS AND ITS RESPONSIBILITIES	Hallett Abend	*David L. Cohn*....28
THE INHABITANTS	Wright Morris	*Roger Butterfield*...29
THE GOLDEN EGG	James Pollak	*Budd Schulberg*....32
LETTY FOX: HER LUCK	Christina Stead	*Harrison Smith*....40
THE CRATER'S EDGE	Stephen Bagnall	*Ben Ray Redman*...42
CHLOE MARR	A. A. Milne	*R. L. North*....44
NORTH AND SOUTH	Elizabeth Bishop	*Lloyd Frankenberg*.46
CRUSADE	Captain John Waller	*Martha Bacon*....46
JOSHUA BEENE AND GOD	Jewel Gibson	*Phil Stong*....48
WE ARE BESIEGED	Barbara Fitzgerald	*R. Ellis Roberts*....48
NO WOMAN'S WORLD	Iris Carpenter	*John Barkham*....49
THE IDOLS OF THE CAVE	Frederic Prokosch	*Nathan L. Rothman*.50
THE BIG CLOCK	Kenneth Fearing	*Howard Haycraft*...50
THE IMPUDENCE OF YOUTH	Warwick Deeping	*Grace Frank*....51
ON SOME FAIR MORNING	Catherine Hutter	*Nancy G. Chaikin*..52
JULE	George Wylie Henderson	*Merle Miller*....56

DEPARTMENTS

TRADE WINDS, by Bennett Cerf....6
LITERARY CRYPT....28
EDITORIAL....30
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR....31
SEEING THINGS, by John Mason Brown....36
LITERARY I.Q....44
LISTENING, by Albert N. Williams....54
THE NEW RECORDINGS, by Edward Tatnall Canby....58
THE PHOENIX NEST, by William Rose Benét....63
DOUBLE-CROSTIC: No. 655....66

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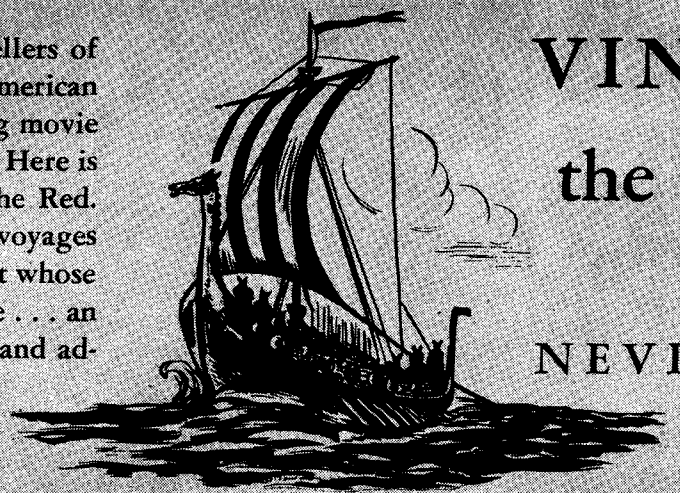

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For the devoted whodunit fan, the piecing together of evidence is done beautifully. And to all readers, the ending will be a surprise. It certainly was to Reggie!

* * *

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The Gunman

THE CRIME CLUB

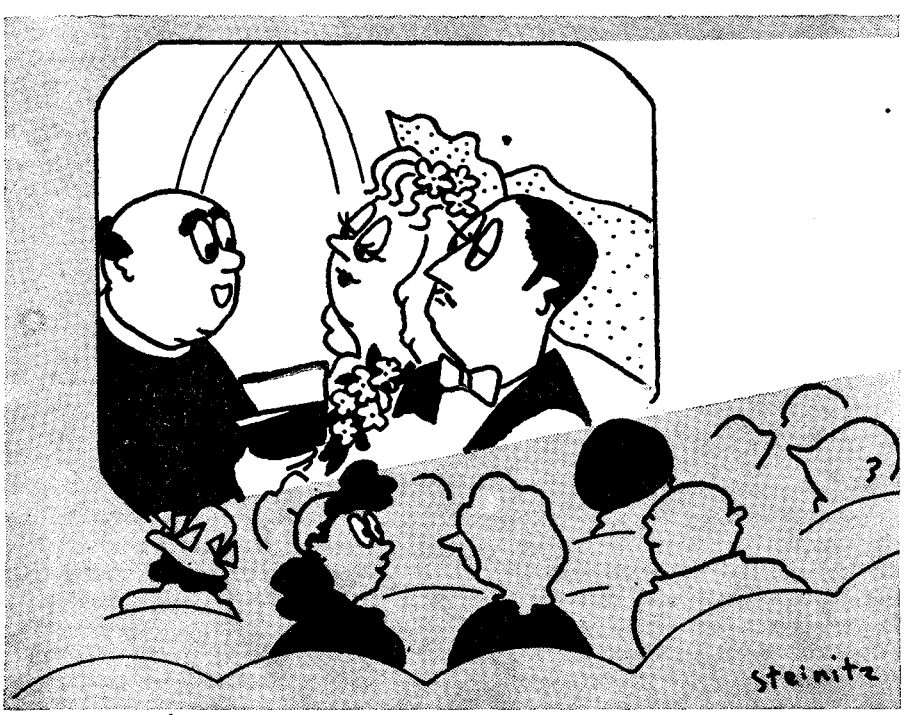
TRADE Winds

AFTER MANY MONTHS of delicate negotiations, the legal department of Marshall Field's in Chicago has finally cleared up all litigation connected with the Case of the Perplexed Pachyderm, and hinted to Book-Buyer Rose Oller that she be a bit more particular in the future as to the character and disposition of the feature attractions she lines up for her department.

The trouble began over a year ago when Miss Oller discovered that personal appearances of such lush, glamorous lady scriveners as Kathleen Winsor, Clare Jaynes, and Kenneth Horan brought Chicago citizens out in droves —checkbooks in hand. Drunk with success, Rose figured she'd do even better by booking an attraction that weighed as much as her eleven previous ones put together, and signed up a baby elephant to stand by one Saturday afternoon when the holiday crowds were just beginning to assemble. The baby elephant turned out to be a ton or two heavier than expected, but finally was transported safely to the third floor of Marshall Field's via one of the freight elevators. He blinked benevolently and scarcely stirred when the crowd "oohed" and "aahed" and bought every book in sight that vaguely had to do with elephants — including "Saratoga Trunk" and "Halsey's Tusk Force." The trouble started only when they tried to coax him back onto the freight elevator. He wasn't having any of it. And when one perspiring porter accidentally backed him into the sharp-edged handle of the elevator - starting - device, the elephant trumpeted angrily, and charged out into the main aisle of the store.

Customers scurried in all directions. Rose Oller swooned. John Scheele, her imperturbable associate, raised one eye and murmured "Elefantastic!" The frightened animal picked up speed and was doing about forty by the time he reached the rug department. One customer, pricing carpets for her new living room, looked up to see the cause of the commotion, screamed, and dove clear over a mahogany counter into the arms of Fred Babcock, literary editor of the *Tribune,* who was valiantly trying to head off the elephant by crying "Whoa, bossie!"

The animal finally was cornered on his third lap around the track, just about the time several surprised but ever-alert lawyers were filing their first suits for damages. The elephant, obviously an omnivorous reader, refused to budge from the book department again until they built a wooden ramp over the marble staircase to the second and main floors. That took ten hours. The legal complications took ten months.



"I don't remember this scene in the book!"

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There is never a dull moment in the book business. . . .

BEGINNING OCTOBER 20, the *New York Herald Tribune's* Sunday book section will be enlivened by a weekly column of literary news and gossip by Roger B. Linscott. . . . Adolph Kroch, famous Chicago bookseller, plans to call it a day, come January, and turn the presidency of the firm over to son Carl. A not-unobservant publisher, incidentally, met Carl's wife Jeanette for the first time on September 16. On September 17 he informed his sales manager that he would cover Chicago personally hereafter. Coincidence, probably. . . . Frank Clough is another veteran bookman whose retirement (after 54 years with the Fred Harvey System) creates a big gap in the literary scene. Harold Belt replaces him. . . . Reed College and the Library Association of Portland, Oregon, are co-sponsors of a three-day Northwestern Writers' Conference, opening October 31. The speeches of sixteen guests (including James Stevens, Luther H. Evans, Horace Cayton, Philip H. Parrish, Ernest Haycox, Stewart Holbrook, Carl Van Doren, H. G. Merriam, and Richard Neuberger) will be published later in a volume to be called "Northwest Harvest." . . .

THE JOHN HERSEY-HAROLD ROSS tenstrike, "Hiroshima," appeared while I was on vacation, and by now all the news about it is old hat. You may be interested, however, in the comments of two publishers who happened to have advertisements scheduled in the issue of *The New Yorker* that was devoted to the Hersey piece (a certain collector's item). Publisher Number One said, "I felt like a fool seeing my ad next to soul-shattering stuff like that." Publisher Number Two exulted, "What a wonderful break to have a column in that issue! People will be seeing it ten years from now!" . . . And a third publisher was buttonholed by a wild-eyed little man who exclaimed, "My novel will make people forget the Hersey piece. I gotta hero who invents an atom bomb so terrific it makes the ones of today look like fire-crackers. I gotta perfect title for it too: 'Norman Cousins Is Obsolete'." . . .

HOLLYWOOD. . . . An audience of ornery minions of Scribner's, Grosset and Dunlap, Harcourt Brace, and the Modern Library cried approximately two hundred gallons of tears at Carol Hill's private prevue of "The Yearling." This superb picture is worth all the trouble—and more—that went into its years of shooting, and if there

MARGARET HALSEY

Humorists
are not humorists
24 hours a day

Margaret Halsey is well established as a humorist, but like many humorists she has a sharp social conscience: she is quick to feel a mental compulsion to do something about things which seem to her to be unjust, unreasonable, or unfair. Becoming disturbed about the average citizen's prejudices, she wrote (in 1944) *Some of My Best Friends Are Soldiers,* which packed a hefty wallop at the tender spots, sparked some good chuckles, and piled up a substantial sale.

Her new book, *Color Blind,* for the most part is not funny. In it, she sets out to dissipate many nebulous clouds that hang heavily over the nation. She demonstrates how prejudice has been tied to a sex myth so that it might support a "realistic" economic policy in regard to the Negro population. She shows how cynics have hog-tied decent people by inventing an emotional and unscientific swamp of fears. She shows how honest people can write and live up to a new set of rules, and enjoy doing it.

Her introduction reveals a little about life with a Humorist: *"Humorists are not humorists twenty-four hours a day. In fact when you get to know them well they are often not humorists at all. They tend to be hypersensitive, taut neurotic creatures driven by God knows what obscure compulsion to earn their living the hard way.*

"The professional humorist catches cold, is jilted in love, pays income tax, and worries about the atom bomb. If at any time he appears to be merry and relaxed about these phenomena, it is only because he has signed a contract with somebody involving the receipt of money. His family could tell you another story. And when, as happened to me, he finds himself in a situation which includes the Negro-white patterns of our country, he reacts as a citizen and not as a jester."

First reviews indicate that Margaret Halsey's contribution as a citizen may be as popular as it is vital.

Color Blind

A WHITE WOMAN LOOKS AT THE NEGRO

By Margaret Halsey

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"Mother!"

is any justice in Hollywood, should waltz off with just about all the Oscars in sight at the next Academy Award dinner. . . . Other new pictures worth running to see are "Henry V," "The Killers," "Cluny Brown," "Notorious," "The Big Sleep," and Bob Hope's "Monsieur Beaucaire." "Easy to Wed" also calls for some running—but in the opposite direction. . . . A big investment trust, toying with the notion of acquiring a block of stock in a certain studio, dispatched a corps of efficiency experts not so long ago to check on conditions there. Bert Kalmar spotted one of them pouncing on a workman at the end of a particularly hot and irritating day. "What's your job around here?" snapped the expert. "Electrician," answered the workman. "Oho!" said the expert. "What's an ohm?" "How's that?" asked the workman. "An ohm, an ohm," the expert repeated. "Oh, that," said the workman. "It's an Englishman's castle, you buzzard: you don't catch me that way!" . . .

MOST OF THE GOOD FOLK at our camp on Lake Mooselookmaguntic this summer spent their time telling about fish they didn't catch while making slams they didn't bid. They played a new kind of cut-in bridge (new to me, at any rate) called "Chicago," designed to hold the extra player's time out to a minimum. Only four hands are dealt. In the first, nobody is vulnerable. In the second and third, the team holding the deal is vulnerable. In the fourth, everybody is vulnerable. Passed out hands are dealt over. A game hand non-vulnerable counts three hundred points over the line; one vulnerable counts five hundred. The obvious advantage of sacrifice bids by non-vulnerable players adds great excitement to the game—and some magnificent misunderstandings. . . .

DAVID PARTRIDGE is cooking up a new anthology for Doubleday to be called "Crimes of Passion." The seldom inarticulate Mr. Cartmell declares "it will be quite an unusual collection of stories from many nations dealing with particularly bizarre crimes of a far greater range than the simple triangle combination that might at first spring to mind." . . . Cartmell is grieved, incidentally, because a story he put in his guest Trade Winds column was omitted at the last minute for lack of space. It concerns an old colored preacher who was warning his parishioners about sin. "Sin," he said, "is lak a big dog. Dere's de big dog of pride, and de big dog of envy, and de big dog of gluttony, and, finally, brothers, dere's de big dog of sex. Now folks you gotta kill dose big dogs afore you're ever gonna get to heaven. It can be done—I know—cause *I've* done it. I killed de big dog of envy and de big dog of pride, and de big dog of gluttony—and yes, brethern, I killed de big dog of sex!" A small voice rose from the rear of the church: "Brother, are you sure dat las' dog didn' die a nat'chel death?" BENNETT CERF.

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(Advertisement)

What Is Life?

This is the story of a book—a small book only ninety pages long. It is called WHAT IS LIFE? and deals with a basic question to which philosophy, science, religion, and the man in the street have always wanted an answer. The author is Erwin Schrödinger, a Nobel Prize winner and a world-renowned physicist. The book was originally published in England by the Cambridge University Press, and was brought out in this country by The Macmillan Company.

The *London Spectator* started its review of the book with these words: "This I take to be one of the most valuable books ever issued by the Cambridge University Press in its importance to educated men and women."

In America, two pages of the *Saturday Review of Literature* were devoted to an appreciative review by John F. Wharton. The book began to sell and sell, with one printing following another. Mr. Wharton said in part:

"In the history of writing, a tiny number of instances exist where a short document has profoundly affected human thought and action. Thomas Paine's 'Common Sense' and the first Communist Manifesto come immediately to mind. Perhaps a still better example is Willard Gibb's famous brief paper which revolutionized chemistry. I have been told that the findings of the Abbé Mendel were set forth with comparative brevity. It is interesting to note that the latter two writings went almost unnoticed for nearly fifty years.

"The little ninety-page book by Erwin Schrödinger entitled 'What Is Life?' may, quite possibly, turn out to be a document to rank with the four mentioned above. It may also suffer the neglect accorded the latter two.

"Only a few copies have been printed here; most of these have found their way to private ownership; it would probably require some ingenuity to obtain a copy today. But the effort, if you make it, will prove worth your while."

A new printing of WHAT IS LIFE? is now available at your bookstore. It will be of interest to everyone who wants to know what light modern physics and biology can throw on the riddle of life. A reading of this book will reward the intelligent reader with an exciting new conception of life itself. *At your bookstore, $1.75*

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Also by

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The story of what happened to Shakespeare in the New World, from Puritan New England to gay nineteenth-century New Orleans. An outstanding example of scholarly research presented for the intelligent public, this book shows how our attitude toward Shakespeare and his influence here have varied with changing American life and culture. $3.50

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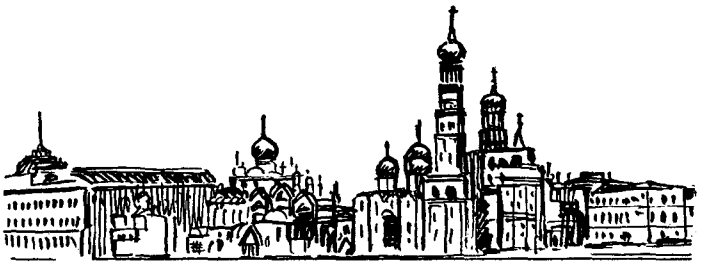
REPORT about RUSSIA



WHEN our Foreign Editor went abroad, he, as well as we, naturally thought he would visit Moscow among the literary capitals of Europe. He speaks Russian, an accomplishment to be envied these days. Our Foreign Editor had been in Russia a number of times and counted among his friends many Russian notables. So naturally, we expected for these columns a Moscow Letter.

It was only when our Editor returned that we learned why it was that Warsaw was as far toward Moscow as he got. He had put in his application for a Russian visa, with the explanation that Holt was interested in things Russian and felt an obligation to see that Russia was not neglected on its lists.

Just as he was ready to take off, he received word from the Russian consulate that Moscow had been queried. Moscow reported that Holt had not, apparently, published works on Russia, and consequently Moscow saw no reason for granting a visa.

For the publisher who had introduced for the first time in English one of the Russian immortals—Dostoevski—this was a little bit startling. But it is not that which concerns us so much as the basic factor of what we lightly call "public relations" on the part of the Russians, a lack of knowledge of the true function of the book publisher in the United States.

We can understand that the Russians may be annoyed, say, at any number of powerful newspaper publishers. It is easy for a newspaper, under the guise of objectivity, to forget in the daily grind of things, that what appears as fact today may well be fiction tomorrow. The book publisher, on the other hand, tries to publish for posterity. Consequently, he is less concerned with fact as fact than he is with truth as it is today and ought to be tomorrow.

A good book publisher publishes books for no particular group or for no particular point of view. Our task momentarily might be easier, for then we might eliminate that hazard on your part, the buyer and reader, of picking and choosing. As it is, however, you will find on a Holt list or on any other good publisher's list, books that appeal to the right, the center, the left of center, and the left. Our canon of selection is always this: is the book honestly conceived, is there need for it now, will it serve the future?

It seems to us rather tragic that on a list of an important American publishing house there will be no book concerned with one of the great social experiments of all time, the Russian. Of course, we could have published a dozen books which "exposed" or which were written "second hand", both pro and con. But these are, at best, a poor substitute for the books that can be written on the scene, filled with the fidelity of observation which passes for truth because it was what the observer saw and felt.

The Russians should have learned from that early and bitter period of their Revolution, when all news of Russia came from Riga. Rarely was there such distortion as in those times. It set back world understanding of Russia by at least a generation. But it appears this is to continue in this, the age of so-called instantaneous communication.

Perhaps equally tragic is the corollary, that only the American books which expose the weaknesses of our democratic system, are translated into Russian.

We feel that people are far more important than states, since the quality of peoples makes the quality of states. If we cannot learn to know the Russian people, and they in turn cannot learn to know us, it is rather foolish to talk about one world, or two worlds, or spheres of influence. In fact, we ought to redefine what we mean by "civilization". Someone ought to offer a prize for such a definition. Maybe Holt will.

But anyway, this is our report to you. Maybe it was a fearful bureaucrat who made the ruling which prevents your reading a Holt book about Russia written by a Russian. If so, we hope he has no children, who may rue the day when misunderstanding, mounting day by day because civilization has broken down, was helped along by him.

HENRY HOLT & COMPANY
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The Saturday Review of Literature

Portrait of a Misanthrope

CLIFTON FADIMAN

"Today Ambrose Bierce solicits our attention because he is a minor prophet of hopelessness."

WE know something of the first seventy-one years of Ambrose Bierce's life only. In 1913 he vanished into the revolutionary wilderness of Mexico, and has not, for all the legends and rumors, been heard of since. If at this writing Bierce were still alive, he would be 104 years old. One doubts, however, that these added years could have mellowed his attitude toward the human race. Indeed, the whole conduct of civilized man since Bierce's presumed death in 1914 is happily calculated to confirm his misanthropy. Lidice, Belsen, Dachau, Hiroshima, Nagasaki, Bikini—all would have afforded him a satisfaction deeper and more bitter than that which he drew from the relatively paltry horrors of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. If he was killed, as some aver, during the Villa-Carranza fracas, it seems rather a pity. The current scene would have filled him with so pure a pleasure.

Whenever and wherever he may have died, Ambrose Gwinett Bierce began life on June 24, 1842 in Meigs County, Ohio. Born in a log cabin, he defied Alger's Law and did not become President. His father was a poor, eccentric farmer who begat nine children, Ambrose being the youngest. He was also the only one of whom the world has heard, thus supplying another bit of evidence to support the by no means fanciful theory that exceptional persons are often the last, or among the later, of a long series of progeny.

The elder Bierce seems to have suffered an unhappy childhood. This formed the major part of his legacy to Ambrose, for his son hated the home and, except for one brother, Albert, the entire family. The unlovely circumstances of his early life may be in part the source of Bierce's later addiction to aristocratic heroes. Assuredly they played a part in the formation of his misanthropy. A by no means accidentally large number of his horrifying humorous tales turn on patricide and, less often, matricide, with an occasional avunculicide, if that be the word, thrown in for variety. (See, for example, "An Imperfect Conflagration," with its masterly opening sentence: "Early one June morning in 1872 I murdered my father—an act which made a deep impression on me at the time.") To declare that Bierce's collected works are but a kind of inky revenge on his father is cheap, easy, and false; yet it does not require a Freud to trace in his fierce assault on all forms of authority some evidence of a clouded childhood.

THE fact that Bierce wrote like an educated man is hardly explained by his education. When he was seventeen he spent a year at the Kentucky Military Institute. Not long afterward the Civil War broke out and he enlisted as a volunteer with the Union Army. (We have no evidence to indicate that he had any special sympathy with the ideal aims of the North and some slight evidence to show that he felt a mild tenderness for the ante-bellum aristocratic planter-culture of the South.) He began as a drummer-boy with the 9th Indiana Infantry, fought bravely, was wounded at Kenesaw Mountain, and emerged from the war a lieutenant, with the brevet title of major. It is evident that he possessed what military men call "qualities of leadership," that is, qualities of leadership in the stupidest of man's activities. It is no less evident that his Civil War interlude affected him in more important ways. It was directly responsible for some of his most finely felt, least posed stories. It very possibly—for he was but a boy when he played his part in the only genuinely tragic social experience our country in its brief history has lived through—helped to shift his perspective on mankind toward the dark end of the spectrum. And it may have been the spring of a certain military quality in him, for he writes like a conquistador, quick to take offence and to requite insult.

Shortly after the end of the war Bierce removed to San Francisco, the city which, though he lived there only intermittently, was to remain the focal point of his career. His first job was that of nightwatchman at the Sub-treasury Building. However, his personality was ill-adapted to the least imaginative of all possible activities: guarding other people's money. He seems to have become vaguely involved in local politics and to have employed his talents as a controversial cartoonist, directing his ire, with characteristic impartiality, against both factions. But now journalism rose to mark him for her own, and in her dubious service he was to continue for many a year, writing well, writing badly, doubtless writing too much. From 1866 to 1872 he contributed various splinters of hackwork to the *Argonaut* and the *News Letter*, of which he finally became editor. In 1871, when he was twenty-nine and old enough to know his own temperament better, he married Mary Ellen Day, the daughter of a '49-er. The years from 1872 to 1876 were spent in London, where he engaged in the peculiar slashing journalism that had already won for him the sobriquet "Bitter Bierce." This period appears to have left little impress on his work.

In 1876, his health having failed,

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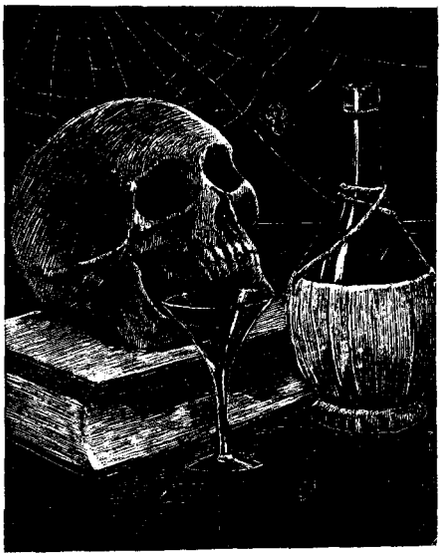
he and the family (there were now two little sons, with a third child on the way) moved back to San Francisco. Bierce contributed again to the *Argonaut*, to the *Wasp*, and from 1887 to 1896 conducted a column in the San Francisco *Sunday Examiner*, a Hearst paper. It is from these fitful contributions and weekly jottings that the contents of several of his books were drawn. The *Examiner* period seems to have constituted his apogee. During the late eighties and nineties he wielded extraordinary local influence as a kind of West Coast Samuel Johnson. It was, if any place could have been, the right place for him. Then, as it does now, if to a lesser degree, San Francisco tolerated and even encouraged salient personalities. Following the *Examiner* period Bierce worked as Washington correspondent for the *American*, and in later years was a contributor to *Cosmopolitan*.

Dead ends, failures, and tragedies marked his personal life. He was a man, like many, unfit by nature for socialized living, a non-domestic animal. The family pattern of unhappiness repeated itself on a tragic scale. In 1899 his older son was killed in a vulgar shooting-brawl over a girl; two years afterward his wife left him, finally divorcing him, thirty-three years too late, in 1904; in 1901 his younger son died of alcoholism; and at last in 1913 Ambrose Bierce, old, asthmatic, weary, his creative power only an acrid memory, a bitter jester who had outlived his time, made his queer escape from the civilization he had for forty years derided, and somewhere, presumably in Mexico, encountered his favorite character, the figure who, so to speak, animates his finest stories: Death.

DURING Bierce's lifetime his vogue, except in and around San Francisco, stayed within modest bounds, partly through the efforts of his publishers, some of whom possessed a natural talent for bankruptcy. How to "handle" his talent so as to make it yield the maximum public success Bierce never learned, nor did he care to learn. The emergence of his reputation was more or less coincidental with the disappearance of himself. The tendency grew to concentrate on the Bierce "legend" and to neglect his books. Nevertheless there has been a constant undercurrent of interest in him as a writer. This is ascribable to our natural fascination by the supernatural, and no less to the equally paradoxical fact that men love to hear themselves scorned and rejected if only the scorn and rejection are sufficiently eloquent. Jeremiah will never be out of a job. Finally, there is a *fin de siécle* aura about



Bierce that has these many years recommended him to professional and amateur *épateurs* of the bourgeoisie. He has, for example, furnished considerable inspiration to H. L. Mencken and has been a potent force among the writing men of the West Coast for the past twenty-five years.

Today, over and above the simple fact that he is still generally readable, Bierce solicits our attention because he is a minor prophet of hopelessness. On August 6, 1945, the planet, with the United States in the lead, passed half-unconsciously into an era of despair. With a noiseless flash over Hiroshima *homo sapiens* issued the first dramatic announcement of his inability to make a biological success of himself. The next few years or decades seem almost certain to prove years or decades of planetary wars that will rend and crack and shiver the earth's thin skin, years of wholesale suicide, years that will paralyze the moral and religious sense of mankind. Civilized man—unless he decides to use his reason—will fall forward into a new and almost unimaginable barbarism. The time for the pessimists has come again, whether they be philosophical pessimists, like the French Existentialists, or pessimists in action, like the totalitarians, the managerial state-ers, and the heralds of the American (or Russian) Century. The men and women who do not like men and women are in the saddle and will ride mankind.

What has all this to do with a dead journalist named Ambrose Bierce? Consider this: the dominating tendency of American literature and social thought, from Benjamin Franklin to Sinclair Lewis, has been optimistic. It has believed in man, it has believed in American man. It has at times been satirical and even bitter—but not negative. It gave the world the positive statements of the Declaration, the Constitution, the Gettysburg Address, Emerson, Whitman, William James, Henry George, John Dewey. This has been the stronger current. But along with it there has coursed a narrower current, the shadowed stream of pessimism. Perhaps its obscure source lies in the Southern philosophers of slavery or in the bleak hell-fire morality of early puritan divines like Michael Wigglesworth and Jonathan Edwards. It flows hesitantly in Hawthorne, with fury in "Moby Dick" and "Pierre," with many a subtle meander in the dark symbolism of Poe. It may appear in part of a writer (the Mark Twain of "The Mysterious Stranger" and "The Man that Corrupted Hadleyburg") and not in the whole of him. It runs through Stephen Crane. You may trace it in an out-of-the-mainstream philosopher such as Thorstein Veblen. You will find it in the thought of H. L. Mencken and the stories of Ring Lardner. And you will see it plain, naked, naive, and powerful, in the strange fables of Ambrose Bierce.

AS OUR planet rolls slowly or rapidly in the direction of its own eclipse, men's minds will darken with it. Losing their faith in themselves, they will look into each other's eyes with hatred, and every man's hand will rest lightly upon his dagger. Even the most sensitive will find it difficult, as the lamps go out, to draw comfort from the words of those who believe in progress. Decline and fall will be the order of the day and night. New philosophies of violence and despair will be contrived, and old nihilisms be exhumed. Among these old nihilisms that of Ambrose Bierce will take its minor place and, for all his weaknesses, he will speak to us with added vehemence.

Those weaknesses are apparent. Bierce's nihilism is as brutal and simple as a blow, and by the same token not too convincing. It has no base in philosophy and, being quite bare of shading or qualification, becomes, if taken in overdoses, a trifle tedious. Except for the skeleton grin that creeps over his face when he has devised in his fiction some peculiarly grotesque death, Bierce never deviates into cheerfulness. His rage is unselective. The great skeptics view human nature without admiration but also without ire. Bierce's misanthropy is too systematic. He is a pessimism-machine. He is a Swift minus true intellectual power, Rochefoucauld with a bludgeon, Voltaire with stomach ulcers.

Nevertheless he can and will be read with interest in an age which is getting ready to renounce compromise, kindness, and Christianity. The corrosive definitions of "The Devil's

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Dictionary" will make their appeal to a generation which all over the world is being carefully conditioned to believe in nothing but Force. (And Force is merely Nothing, organized visibly and audibly for the purpose of purposeless destruction.) His cynicism, phrased with really extraordinary concentration, appalled his contemporaries; but it is more likely to attract than to appal us. After a few hours spent with the American (or the British, or the Russian) press, with its almost gloating rehearsal of the day's crimes, tortures, vulgarities, falsehoods, and brutalities, the savageries of Bierce have almost a sympathetic quality. His "Fantastic Fables" strike us as neither fantastic nor fabulous. He seems quite a man of our time.

I DO not wish to overstate the point, for much of Bierce is old-fashioned. His prose at its worst is flawed with the bad taste of his period; his weakness for melodrama occasionally makes us squirm; he frequently overdoes his effects. Yet it is difficult to forget, for instance, the best of the stories in "In the Midst of Life:" "An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge," less interesting as a trick than as a heart-freezing symbolical presentation of the depth of the passion for survival; "Chickamauga," which, by a device of brilliant originality, rams home the pure and shrieking insanity of war; "One of the Missing," which, like so many of his tales, shows a completely modern interest in and understanding of abnormal states of consciousness. Bierce, despite his almost Spanish admiration for "honor," was one of the earliest American writers to dismiss the flapdoodle of war and hold up to our gaze something like its true countenance. It is not so much that he hated war; indeed these stories are marked by a sort of agony of joy over war's horrors. Perhaps Bierce took a cold pleasure in war as the perfect justification of his view of mankind. He may even have liked war—no true lover of war (no German, for instance) has ever been so weak-kneed or weak-stomached as to attempt to disguise its brutality. But, however complicated Bierce's attitude toward war may have been, what he writes has the bitter-aloes taste of truth. He helped blaze the trail for later and doubtless better realists. (It should be noted in passing that some of his stories of the frontier West performed a similar service in the cause of realism. He had no talent for local or temporal detail, but he did seize upon one essential aspect of frontier life—the cheapness with

(*Continued on page* 61)

Warts and All

HESKETH PEARSON

AT THE age of fourteen I wrote three numbers of a magazine for domestic consumption, and the majority of my contributions were described as "summarys (*sic*) of famous men's lives." Thus I began life as a biographer; and though many years were to pass, during which I earned my living as a clerk in a shipping office, a motor salesman, an actor, a secretary, an organizer, a soldier, an actor again, a journalist, and a publicity consultant, I returned to biography at the age of forty with a very clear idea of how to set about it.

While I was still in the army Lytton Strachey's "Eminent Victorians" appeared, and it bowled me over. For years I thought that his method of portrayal was unsurpassable; but his innumerable disciples, with their bastard biographies in which fact and fiction were inextricably intermingled, showed up the essential weakness of his method; and agreeing with Dr. Johnson that if biography is not factually true it is valueless, I reacted from Strachey to Boswell, whom I had admired since the age of eighteen. All the same Strachey taught me something: the necessity of selection and condensation. Boswell's "Johnson" includes a mass of irrelevant stuff that does nothing to vivify its central character, and Boswell was not in a position to obtain some of the best Johnsoniana of his time, as may be seen in Hugh Kingsmill's "Johnson Without Boswell."

By drawing on the first-hand records of contemporaries, by including nothing that does not illuminate or build up character, and by letting my subject speak for himself wherever possible, my method is therefore to combine the journalistic vividness of Boswell with the critical exclusiveness of Strachey and the autobiographical intimacy of Pepys. Naturally I consider this method the best: it seems to me the only possible way of bringing a man back to life, which after all is the main business of the biographer. The so-called psychological study, which reveals no one but the psychologist, the prettily finished "literary" portrait, so much admired by academic critics for its "style," the carefully contrived "work of art," which is usually quite lifeless, may appeal to those who prefer bookmaking to truth. But the job I always set myself is to tell "a round unvarnished tale" and to re-create a character "in his habit as he lived," warts and all. Of course method is not everything. The biographer must adopt whatever plan suits his temperament, but his work will be kept alive by the judgment, skill, insight, and readability displayed within the limits of his plan.

Hesketh Pearson: "I doubt if you will find a score of great characters in the world's history."

MY first biography, a life of my maternal ancestor Erasmus Darwin, was written when the Strachey school was in full blast; and as it was flat against the current of the time, it sold about 400 copies. Most publishers are like most theatre-managers: they are afraid of anything that appears to them off the beaten track, and will only gamble on what they consider certs. In other words they never gamble; and I experienced great difficulty in placing my early biographies. I pointed out to them that everyone was tired of reading the last passage of Strachey's "Queen Victoria" re-written in a hundred different ways, that the time had come when a little fact could safely be introduced into a morass of fancy, and that biography should not be confused with picturesque romance. It was no good. "Give us more Strachey!" was their cry, just as the theatre-managers were calling for more Coward. It would have been easy enough to comply with their demand, but if I could not write to please myself I preferred the life of an actor or advertiser, both of which were far easier and more lucrative than a life spent in creating my sort of biography.

And not only was my method un-

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fashionable: my subjects were, too. No one had ever heard of Erasmus Darwin; and when I followed him up with Sydney Smith, my agent thought I had gone mad. I was asked to do Charles Darwin, described by the publisher who made the suggestion as "the famous monkey-man." I was asked to do any one of the figures already popularized by Strachey: Melbourne, Palmerston, Disraeli, Gladstone, Newman, Cromer, Prince Albert, even Queen Victoria herself. In due time all these were done and overdone by the Stracheyites. But the people who attracted me were queer out-of-the-way folk, extraordinary characters, wits and humorists, who were too individualistic to reach high office in their professions or to be accepted as "safe" by the ruling powers.

Scarcely a publisher had heard of Sydney Smith, and none of them thought that a book about him would appeal to the reading public. The unfortunate reading public, dazed by the Strachey crowd into believing that if a biography did not read exactly like a novel it was unreadable, and that if the subject were practically unknown he was not worth knowing, took a lot of coaxing before it would try something fresh. But gradually a section of it became aware that readability and reliability are not antagonistic terms, that "characters" are more remarkable than "types," that truth is more interesting than fiction, and that a genius, however inglorious, is better worth knowing than a mediocrity, however illustrious.

GREAT characters are the rarest of creatures. There are plenty of great writers, great composers, great painters, great warriors, statesmen, prophets, ecclesiastics, scientists, actors, lawyers, sportsmen, criminals, and so on; but I doubt if you will find a score of great characters in the world's history. Dr. Johnson, Socrates, Dean Swift, Voltaire, Sydney Smith, Carlyle, Beethoven, Wellington, Lincoln: all these were great characters, and in later days we have Mark Twain, Wilde, and Shaw. Humor is the essence of a great character, and from his work and such knowledge of the man as we possess we may guess that Cervantes was one; but it would not be easy to add to my list on the evidence of contemporary records. If therefore the biographer depended on great characters as material for his art, he would have a very restricted choice. Fortunately there are quite a few lesser characters who are almost as interesting to write about, and after disposing of Sydney Smith I was fortunate to find a remarkable contrast in Gilbert and Sullivan and a fascinating study in Henry Labouchère.

These three books were moderately successful, but it was not until I wrote the life of Bernard Shaw that the reading public fully endorsed my method. The subject, of course, was popular; but so had Gilbert and Sullivan been; which makes me think that the exceptional success of my G. B. S. was at any rate partly due to my way of handling a theme, recognition of which had been slowly growing as the reaction against fictional biography had set in. Shaw himself approved of it and saw what I had aimed at. When we met after he had read the typescript he said: "Your practically complete ignoring of my prefaces makes the book more readable and not intolerably long; and for my part I want people to read my prefaces and not read about

them. But your enemies on the press (if you have any) will say, if they are intelligent enough, 'This is not classical biography: it is gossip.' To this you can reply 'That is exactly what classical biography is: if you want Shavian philosophy instead, read Shaw's works.' This will be perfectly sound in principle and effective as repartee; but you must be prepared with it, otherwise I should not bother you about it." Shaw was pleased by the success of the biography. "The book has created a sort of Shavian furor," he told me, "and brought me a heap of letters from old people whom it has reminded of old contacts with me." But later he was worried by it: "The success of your book has driven the whole trade mad. They all want a book about me, a film about me, anything about me."

After that I wrote a very different sort of book, a life of Shakespeare, which drew this from Shaw: "You have made a good job of it, which is more than I can say for the older biographies . . . you have come out of it very successfully because you are a genuine soaker in Shakespeare, and have not read him as a task. You have him by heart; and your quotations leave all the other biographers nowhere. I had no idea of this: it throws a new spotlight on you."

Then came my "Conan Doyle," which Shaw had strongly advised me against, his chief reason being that Doyle's spiritualism would prove an almost insurmountable problem for the biographer; but after reading it he revised his opinion, saying that I had given a convincing explanation of the spiritualism by showing it as an inevitable outcome of the man's character.

All the same G. B. S. did not approve of the descent from Shaw to Doyle, and when I said that my next book was to be about Oscar Wilde he did his utmost to put me off it, even suggesting other subjects in his anxiety to prevent me from showing that Ireland had produced a contemporary personality at least as remarkable as himself; for Irish writers hate one another, and the only time I ever noticed real dislike of a fellow-being in Shaw's manner and speech was when we were discussing Wilde. "As you have done Shakespeare and Shaw, are you not bound to do Dickens?" he urged. "All the recent lives of him have been malignant utterances by devil's advocates. Anybody but Dickens will be a comedown after Shakespeare and G. B. S. Then, when you are through with him, you might consider Walter Savage Landor, whose 'Imaginary Conversations' will show you how boring characters are which are not idiosyncratically differentiated like those of Shakespeare, Shaw, Scott, and Dumas. And Leigh Hunt might be worth thinking of."

Feeling that, if I welcomed these proposals, Shaw would go on to suggest that I might re-write the "Dictionary of National Biography;" I said nothing. But I settled down to Oscar Wilde; which evidently annoyed Shaw, because, as far as I know, though he has read all my other works, he has not read this one. The life of a biographer, like that of a burglar, has its sad moments. Still, I can understand his abstention; for he has said so much in praise of Frank Harris's "Oscar Wilde" that he would have to eat more words than any mortal could be expected to digest, and Shaw has never had a good appetite in that respect.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 654)

WILLIAM A. WHITE:
AUTOBIOGRAPHY

I have always thought that the ocean was a mistake and that God should have fired the Angel who made it. It has kept the world apart too long and it is too wet and a waste of space. . . . So I lay in my berth and refused human society.

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Fifty Guides to American Civilization

HOWARD MUMFORD JONES

SOME weeks ago a cultivated Chinese scholar asked me for a list of fifty titles which would form the basis for a study of American civilization by his countrymen. Here is the list I drew up for him, which, it occurs to me, might also be suggestive for Americans.

Of course the drawing up of reading lists is one of those parlor games in which any literate person can join, and I do not claim for my little library any special sagacity. In fact my Chinese friend secured other lists of fifty titles from other American friends. And of course if anybody wants to ask: "Why fifty titles? Why not twenty-five? Why not a hundred?" there isn't any answer. Fifty is what my friend asked for and fifty is what he got.

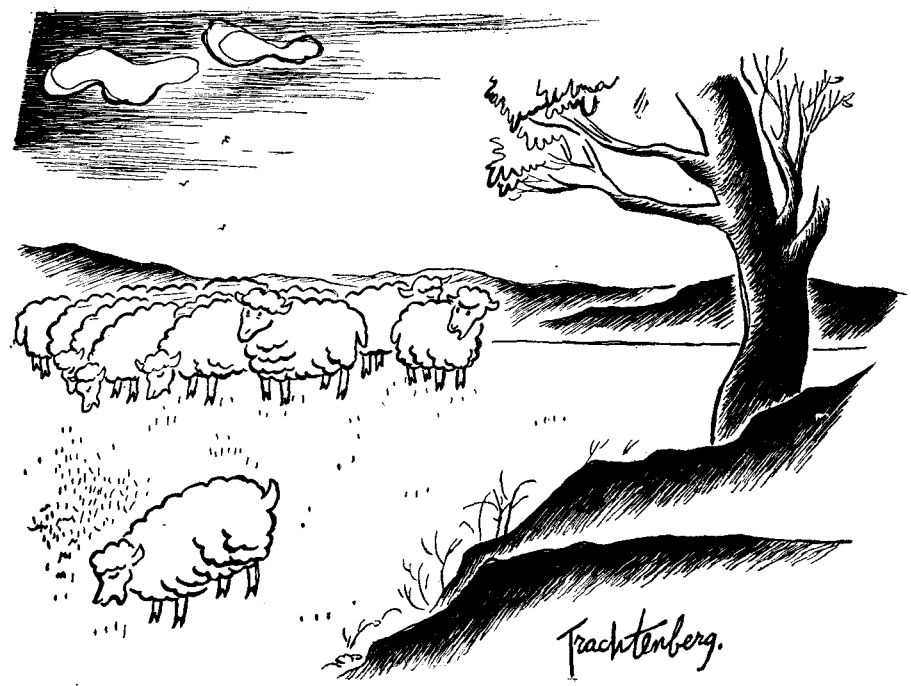
It will be seen that I cheated a little, smuggling in a whole series of books in number eleven and almost duplicating this feat in number 31. On the other hand Hamilton's "Report on Manufactures" isn't much more than an extended essay, and one or two other titles are pretty short.

If this list has any peculiar virtue, I think its virtue lies in the division into ten "European books necessary for an understanding of the United States," and forty American titles. Almost any one of these ten "European" books is ground for vigorous argument—but what's a list for, if you can't depart from it? For that matter, you can argue about almost any of the remaining forty and try to substitute something else.

But here's the list for what it is worth:

I. *European Books Necessary for an Understanding of the United States*

1. Adam Smith, "An Enquiry Concerning the Origin of the Wealth of Nations." Most American thinking on economic life until recent years stems from this classic statement.
2. Thomas R. Malthus, "An Essay on the Principle of Population" (2d. ed.). In contradiction to the professed theory that the United States is a haven for the oppressed, fear of over-population weighs heavily on the American spirit.
3. Charles Darwin, "The Origin of Species." Although Herbert Spencer had more vogue during the last century in the United States than Darwin did, this classic of biology and philosophy convinced many Americans that life is essentially a struggle for survival, however politely disguised.
4. Sigmund Freud, "Basic Writings." I use the title of the Modern Library collection of texts. The tremendous effect of Freud, first upon imaginative artists and then upon the general population, has been to weaken the rational sanctions descending from the eighteenth century and, I fear, spreads among us a profound distrust of human sincerity.
5. John Locke, "Two Treatises of Civil Government." Almost upon publication Locke became "America's philosopher," at least for the eighteenth century and the early years of the nineteenth. The thinking of the Revolutionary generation and of the founding fathers of the Constitution was shaped by him. Perhaps one ought to cite his entire writings.
6. Rousseau, "Le Contrat Social." Although this book never had the vogue in the United States that either "Emile" or "La Nouvelle Héloïse" possessed, it is still the classic statement of the contract theory of political society and represents that fusion of enlightened self-interest and mystical altruism at the heart of the American system.
7. Sir William Blackstone, "Commentaries on the Laws of England." For decades this great work nourished American lawyers; and only in the last half century has the reaction against Blackstone altered legal thinking in the United States.
8. "The Bible." In place of listing theological works like those of Calvin or speculating upon Catholicism and Protestantism in the United States, it seems simpler to point to the book which, in European translation, is the occasion of the theology. The Americans are in some degree the people of "the book," even in ignoring its ethical teachings. The stories of the Bible are woven into American folklore; its ethics, Old Testament and New, profoundly influence American conduct; formal ceremonies cannot take place without using Biblical language; and, though the book is the history of an Oriental race, it has done more than any other single volume to cut off the United States from the non-Christian world.
9. J. B. Bury, "History of the Idea of Progress." This standard historical work, though not widely read, sums up one of the most powerful myths at work among the Americans.
10. Thomas Carlyle, "Heroes and Hero Worship and the Heroic in History." Carlyle had tremendous



"Keep away from him . . . he'll regale you for hours about Bikini!"

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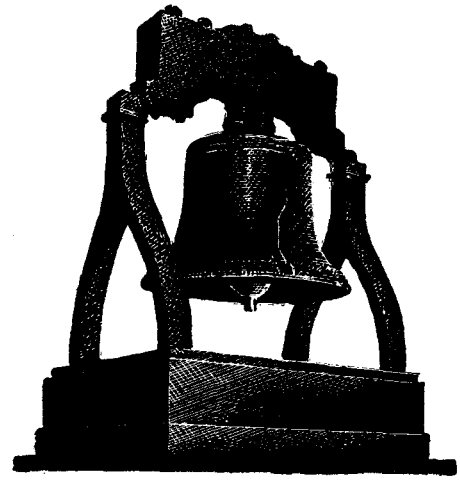
vogue in the United States in the last century; this book, with its theory that life is fundamentally a struggle, that success comes to the obscure if God is with them, that success itself is subjective and cannot be measured by social standards, and that success is notably the reward of the Anglo-Saxon (or at least the Teutonic) "hero," is fundamental to an understanding of American attitudes towards "inferior" races.

II. *American Books*

11. A. M. Schlesinger and D. R. Fox, "History of American Life," 12 vols. (a thirteenth to be added). This is the standard survey of the social growth of the American people; and is rich, full, and interesting. Each volume is by an authority.
12. Samuel E. Morison and Henry S. Commager, "The Growth of the American Republic," 2 vols. This seems to me the best of the shorter modern histories, lacking the tendentiousness of the Beards' "Rise of American Civilization."
13. Frederick J. Turner, "The Influence of the Frontier on American History." One sided as is this powerful essay, its uncritical acceptance by both historians and the general public illustrates the deep emotional drive towards isolationism in the American consciousness.
14. Theodore Roosevelt, "The Winning of the West." I include this as representing a theory of American expansion springing from the Anglo-Saxon race origins theory and marked by a celebration of activity for its own sake characteristic of American mores.
15. Admiral Mahan, "The Influence of Sea Power upon History." In this classic the expansionist doctrine of Theodore Roosevelt is applied to the sea, and offers one of the explanations of American "manifest destiny."
16. Walter P. Webb, "The Great Plains." This book was hotly debated upon its appearance. But it is probable that no other volume gives quite the same sense of the significance of a vast section of the American continent in the development of the nation.
17. Howard Mumford Jones, "America and French Culture." I shamelessly include my own book because it is still the most thorough explication of the relation of a European culture to American culture. Unfortunately it ends with 1848.
18. Marcus Lee Hansen, "The Atlantic Migration." This, together with Hansen's "The Immigrant in American History," is the finest study of immigration into the United States. Unfortunately, it comes down to 1860 only.
19. Carl Wittke, "We Who Built America." I cite this as a representative plea for the assimilation of immigrant groups into the great stream of American life.
20. Gunnar Myrdal, "American Dilemma." The classic study of the greatest failure of American society—the Negro problem.
21. Merle Curti, "The Growth of American Thought." Others will prefer V. L. Parrington, "Main Currents in American Thought," 3 vols., but I cite Curti because I think it is better balanced. Parrington illustrates the values—



and the bias—of the so-called "liberal" mind.

22. E. P. Cubberley, "Public Education in the United States" (latest ed.). This is still the standard survey. It suffers from a lack of critical objectivity, being by an "educator" on education.
23. Allen Burroughs, "Limners and Likenesses." There is no first-class book on the development of any of the arts in the United States. This is possibly the best—on painting. The movies and the radio still lack competent historians; and the histories of American music are invariably bad.
24. Thomas E. Tallmadge. "The Story of Architecture in America." Unexciting but sound. See comment on No. 23.
25. Mark Twain, "Roughing It." Probably the classic expression of frontier values, though one could argue for the writings of Will James, Frank Dobie, and Owen Wister.
26. Francis Pendleton Gaines, "The Southern Plantation." This monograph is definitive; and since there is no single book which is the outstanding "classic" of life in the antebellum South, I prefer to cite this study of a whole literature.
27. Sarah Orne Jewett, "The Country of the Pointed Firs." This collection of tales and sketches seems to me the finest imaginative presentation of the values of New England life—in this case, Maine.
28. Mary Austin, "Earth Horizon." An autobiography illuminating life in the Middlewest.
29. E. F. Dakin, "Mrs. Eddy." This controversial biography of the founder of Christian Science, an American religion *par excellence*, is valuable among other things as illustrative of the control of American life by women.
30. Albert J. Beveridge, "The Life of John Marshall." 2 vols.
31. Carl Sandburg, "Abraham Lincoln (The Prairie Years; The War Years)," 6 vols.
32. Ulysses S. Grant, "Personal Memoirs." I cite the three foregoing as classics of biographical and autobiographical statement; and as throwing light upon the whole vast problem of the American Civil War. Despite the excellence of Douglas Freeman's life of Lee, there is no corresponding "Southern" biography.
33. Frank Norris, "The Octopus." Aside from illustrating the battle between monopoly and the people, which it does confusedly, no other book so clearly dramatizes the American preoccupation with "bigness."
34. William Dean Howells, "The Rise of Silas Lapham." Howells had a wonderful ear for American middle-class speech; and saw intuitively the strength and the pathos of American middle-class family life.
35. Theodore Dreiser, "An American Tragedy." This book, so to speak, shows what happens to American family life after the rise of the megapolitan city.
36. Thornton Wilder, "Our Town." Best exemplifies the values of small-town life.
37. Robert Frost, "Collected Poems." The strength of this volume springs from traditional sagacity at the "grass roots." It shows what agrarian culture could be.
38. J. F. Cooper, "The Last of the Mohicans." The Indian "myth" is not as powerful as it was, nor is the myth of the frontiersman. Books come and go; but Cooper fixed the frontiersman and the Indians in the imagination of most Americans.
39. Benjamin Franklin, "Autobiog-

(*Continued on page* 57)

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"B. F.'s Daughter"

By JOHN P. MARQUAND

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The action in Mr. Marquand's forthcoming novel, "B. F.'s Daughter," to be published next month by Little, Brown & Co., takes place in 1943; the setting is wartime Washington and New York. Polly, whom you will meet in the following preview from the book, is the daughter of B. F. Fulton, a New York millionaire, caught in a backward glimpse at the beginning of her infatuation for Robert Tasmin, young man she should have married but didn't.*

WE'VE GOT TO STICK TOGETHER

IT was a beautiful afternoon with a clear sky and warm sunlight and a soft westerly breeze and the Avenue stretched ahead of him, rising to the low hill at the seventies. He found himself walking faster because he had always loved to walk, and the exercise made his mind run more smoothly. He was just nearing the corner of Sixty-third Street—he remembered he had passed the brick church with the white columns—when a girl called to him.

"Bob," she called. "Hello, darling."

A very pretty girl had stopped in front of him. She had on a light gray spring coat, and a gray felt hat with a feather on the side. Her dark, reddish-yellow hair came out from under it in little curls. Her hands looked very small in tight gray gloves, and she was carrying the sort of gray purse that already was known as an "accessory." It was Polly Fulton all grown up, with beautiful legs, calling him "darling" as girls did then, but with the same eyes and the trace of freckles on her nose and the voice he remembered at Gray's Point.

"Why, hello, Poll," he said. "How's everything?"

"It's funny," she said. "I was just thinking about you and there you were."

"Well," he said, "you've got a great mind, Poll."

"I was just thinking I never see you any more," she said. "Where are you going? What are you doing now?"

As he stood there with her on Park Avenue, he remembered his father's voice asking him just to drop in on the Fultons.

"As a matter of fact," he said, "I live near here between Lexington and Third."

"I don't see why you never told us," she said. "Why haven't you ever come to see us?"

If you got out of the habit of seeing people in New York, you simply did not see them, and it did not mean that you did not like them.

"You know how it is," he said.

"You haven't got anything to do now, have you?" she asked. "You don't act that way."

He often thought of them standing there in the April sunlight in an undefined region between two eras. Everything about her looked fresh and new like the spring. She might so easily have been busy and have said it was swell to see him, and that he must come around just as soon as he could, and now, good-by.

"Why, no, nothing in particular, Poll," he said.

"Then I'll tell you what we'll do," she told him. "We'll go up and see this place where you live, and then you can take me home. I'm going to one of those damned parties tonight, but there's lots of time."

There was a colored maid who picked up his apartment each day, but even so he could not be sure how it would look.

"This is very sudden, Poll," he said.

"Just get used to it," she answered. "I won't compromise you, darling."

"Well, come on, Poll," he said. "I'm sure it will be a great experience for you, and I can stand it if you can."

"You mean you'll face the consequences like a gentleman?" Polly asked.

"Yes," Bob Tasmin said. "We'll face them fearlessly. If necessary I can always marry you to clear your name."

"Oh," Polly said, "please hurry. I can't wait."

It did not sound as Polly had once, but then girls grew up faster than they used to.

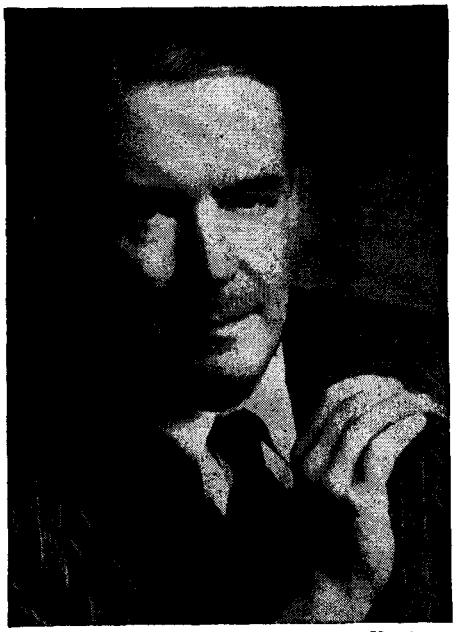
"You're getting to be a big girl now," he said.

"Yes, I am," Polly said. "I'm getting too big for my pants, I guess."

"Oh, now, Poll," Bob Tasmin said. "That's a major problem."

"It's a coarse expression, isn't it?" Polly said. "Excuse me. Girls get to using the most awful words in college."

He had never been in his apartment for very long at a time. He had treated it like those other rooms he had occupied at New Haven and Cambridge which one avoided as much as possible. Its furnishings were mostly odds and ends which his mother had sent him from Gray's Point, a worn Persian carpet, a mission bookcase, three faded upholstered chairs and an old sofa. Besides there were some things which he had accumulated in the phases through which he had lived, a portable typewriter, a traveling clock that he had won at tennis, a set of Balzac that he had bought on the Left Bank, a Chippendale desk from London, one of his photographs of that society at Yale, where all the members were grouped on the front steps as though they had been squeezed out the door like tooth paste from a tube, and a picture of the second crew by the boathouse.



—*Vandamm*

John P. Marquand is writing here about two young Americans groping for reality in their gilded lives.

"I haven't given it much thought," he said, "but it's a gracious room, isn't it?"

"No," Polly said. "It's a nice room. I was afraid it was going to *be* something. It's nice to be somewhere that *isn't* anything. You don't know, but I do."

She pulled off her felt hat and tossed it on a chair. Then she began to take off her coat.

"Wait," Bob Tasmin said, "let me help you." And she smiled at him over her shoulder.

"Oh," she said, "thanks. It slips right off."

HER dress was a light blue and gray silk print that matched the lining of her coat. It had a full pleated skirt that billowed and tossed above her knees as she sat down on the sofa. She opened her bag and pulled out her compact and stared at herself in the little mirror.

"Those damned freckles," she said

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and she rubbed her nose hard. "You've never had to live in as many period rooms as I have. Come on, give me a cigarette."

Bob Tasmin handed her a silver box.

"What's written on the top of it?" she asked, and then she began to read, "'Robert Tasmin, Winner of Men's Singles, Mill River Club, August, 1926.' I remember."

That was the summer when he had spent hours watching Tilden, when he had felt that tennis was very important and that all his personal problems would be solved if he could only cultivate a proper backhand stroke.

"Listen," Polly Fulton said. "Let's tell each other about everything."

WHAT she really meant, of course, was that she wanted to talk about herself. As she sat in the corner of the sofa with her feet curled under her, she told him that college was a fine place because you met girls there who didn't know who you were and cared less. It wasn't like New York where so many people in hotels and speakeasies, and even salesgirls in department stores, recognized her. She could never tell whether people liked her or not, that is, for herself. She didn't want to be just a picture in the rotogravures. She wanted to *do something*, and she didn't mean just doing something for the Junior League. Oh God, those girls in the Junior League, with their lectures and their tea parties and their piddling little ideas of social service . . . When she got through college, how would it be if she got an apartment in Greenwich Village where she could meet all sorts of queer, different people?

"It wouldn't do any good," he said, "because you wouldn't belong there, Poll."

"I don't belong anywhere," she said, "but I've got to have some sort of life."

"You mean a life of your own?" he asked.

"Don't be so nasty," she said.

She rolled her gloves into a little ball and threw them on the floor. Then they sat for a while without speaking.

"Poor little rich girl," he said.

"That isn't original," she said. "Don't be so dull. Do you know you're awfully dull?"

"Do you know you're awfully pretty?"

"There you go." She shrugged her shoulders. "Don't bring sex into it."

"I just said that to cheer you up."

"Darling," Polly said, "I never thought you'd be like this."

"I never thought you'd be like this either," Bob said.

"Well," Polly said, "I suppose you know I always used to be attracted to you, don't you?"

"I didn't know," Bob Tasmin said. "I'd never thought of it particularly."

Polly sighed. "Well, you might think of it now."

"All right," he said. "I'm thinking of it. Listen, Poll. Nearly all the girls I know want to get apartments and want to express themselves, but after all who doesn't? I do. Maybe if we had the courage, we could be emancipated, but I haven't got what it takes and I don't believe you have either. Perhaps it isn't courage. Perhaps we'd better get along with what we've got."

Bob Tasmin was trying to say something that had been on his mind all afternoon, but he had not succeeded.

"For example," he said. "All week I've been reading an old man's love letters because his family are trying to break his will. I don't like it. I could chuck the whole thing and go out to the South Sea islands and raise coconuts and spear fish, but I won't do it because I might not like it there either."

"Why, darling," Polly said, and she was smiling. "I never knew you thought of things like that. You've always seemed so contented. Aren't you happy?"

"No," Bob Tasmin said, "not particularly."

"Oh, Bob," Polly said. "I'm awfully glad." And she danced across the room toward him, and perched on the arm of his chair.

"What are you glad about?" he asked.

"I'm so awfully glad you're not happy."

"Well, thanks," Bob Tasmin said.

"Darling?" She touched his head very softly, and he felt it would be better if she should move somewhere else.

"Yes," he said. "I'm right here. What is it, Poll?"

"If you do go to that island, I'll go with you."

It was the old desert island *motif*, and his common sense told him it was dreadful but it was not bad at all at the time. He wished she were not sitting on the arm of his chair. He knew that he could reach and take Polly Fulton in his arms, and it was a struggle not to do it.

"That's fine. We'll get a schooner, Poll," he said. "There must be a lot of good ones going cheap now."

"Please . . ." Polly said, "don't spoil it. . . . I mean it. I'll go if you will."

"Well, that settles it," Bob Tasmin said. "We'll just drop everything and start tonight if you can throw a few clothes together."

Then he heard her sigh and she stood up. The desert island was gone. He had behaved like a stuffed shirt, and it was gone.

"Well," Polly said, and she sighed again. "I guess you'd better take me home."

"Yes," he said. "I suppose so. Poll, do you know what you look like?"

"Something dim, I guess," she said, "everything considered."

"No," he answered. "You look like Botticelli's 'Spring'."

"Gosh," Polly said. "Is that a pleasant reaction?"

"Yes," he answered. "Pretty pleasant."

"Well," she said, "I'm awfully glad."

THE sky ahead of them was red from the sunset as they walked back to Park Avenue, and he told her quite a lot about Barstow, Barstow and Bryce. He told her that he was taking a beating in that place, and that he was tired of being pushed around. Yet, if he left there, he would have to go through the same thing in some other office. Apparently it did her good to realize that he had troubles of his own.

"Bob," she said. "I wish you'd tell me something."

"All right," he answered. "What is it?"

"It's personal, but I wish you'd tell me."

"Well, all right," he said, "if it's only personal."

"Well, it's something I can't ask. . . . Never mind, I like it better the way it is."

He was not entirely sure what she had been about to ask, but he was almost sure, because he had been asking himself the same question.

"I'm just a shy boy. I guess I'm naturally backward, Poll," he said.

"Darling," she said, and she linked her arm through his.

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"J. B. Yeats"

EDITED BY JOSEPH HONE

EDITOR'S NOTE: *"J. B. Yeats: Letters to His Son W. B. Yeats and Others," from which the following extracts are taken, embraces an unusually long epistolary time-span—from* 1869 *to* 1922. *Unusual, too, is the fact that many of the letters were consciously written with a veiw to ultimate publication. Their composition gave the elder Yeats an opportunity to sublimate his thoughts and opinions by means of a kind of compulsory course in essay writing. The book is published this week by E. P. Dutton & Co.*

TO W. B. YEATS

August 18, 1914
317 W. 29. N. York

My dear Willie—There is one thing never to be forgotten. *That the poet is the antithesis of the man of action.* Even though the hero is always a poet. When Achilles 'sulked' in his tent it was because the poet had driven out into exile the hero—the man of action. When Byron to satisfy his vanity or to put himself right with his contemporaries turned hero, it was because the man of action prompted and reinforced by ignoble or it may be noble motives (it is difficult to credit him with anything noble) had driven out the poet (to his own and the world's loss).

It would be a fine poetical invention to write a description of Achilles when he was 'sulking'. The beloved Patroclus with affection without a thought of self, caressing his master and listening to his complaints—the story-tellers drawing near to relate the achievements of other heroes, yet flattering him in their professional way—and when he thought of Briseis the musicians would have their chance and show their skill. Suddenly Patroclus is killed, and Hector insolently assumes his arms which had been Achilles's arms. Then the primitive man awakes—now the primitive man is either hero or poet according as he has or has not his enemy in sight and has or has not weapons to his hand. A poet indeed is a hero behind the bars, imprisoned either by circumstances too strong for him or by his own thoughts. At first Achilles was imprisoned by his own thoughts—his desire for revenge on Agamemnon and on the Greeks, who on his absenting himself from the fight would be conquered—also he would escape Fate and live long though it be ingloriously—his pride took this ignoble form—and he became *his own prisoner.* Then grief mastered him. *A single feeling,* and as is the wont with a single feeling it turned him again into a man of action. Yet in a rich and abundant nature a single feeling in time takes to itself other feelings, and the poet of many feelings resumes the sovereign power, and the man of action departs however reluctantly. The politic leader of the Grecian hosts took the chance which offered and Achilles was never again the poet. Achilles imprisoned by his own thoughts is as modern as Hamlet. At the last he is the primitive man—acting too quickly for the single feeling to become the multitudinous.

Is not the European situation curious and amazingly unexpected—civilization as Lowell said getting a lift in a powder cart. Because of that big rogue threatening their existence, the other rogues, Russia and England are making friends with as they think them the Mammon of Unrighteousness, and all the nationalities including the Jews and the Irish are invited to share the feast of victory.

It would have pained Dowden as regards Ireland, and it does no doubt pain Lyster, not that Lyster cares for anything outside his library. Dowden's mind moved very slowly, in fact was apparently without any of the impulses of progress and change—full of vitality in his way, which was that of a lichen clinging to its rock.

W. B. Yeats, the "dear Willie" warned here by his father that *"the poet is the antithesis of the man of action."*

I have a graphic picture of things from Lily. On Sunday I spent the day with Quinn and Sir Roger Casement. The latter strong pro-German. He has not really a word to say for Germany except that she is against England—but I say yes!, but she is also against France—Germany victorious and everywhere authority will tighten the reins.—France victorious and once more in the lead! it means sympathy taking the place of cold repression—it means also ideas and the defeat of the dollar. It is curious that Dowden though caring little for money himself, was always on the side of the dollar—he came, as I wrote to him long ago, out of a rich man's house, and he never got over it. Aristocratic wealth is an accident to be apologised for, but middle-class wealth the result of honorable toil and it is difficult to escape from its religion.—Yours affectionately—J. B. YEATS

August 30, 1914
317 W. 29. N. York

Nowadays, especially in America (who leads the world) people live so much on the surface that everywhere is an intoxicating levity. Even marriage aims at being a love passage to terminate as soon as the impulse has spent itself. Marriage used to be a setting out together of a man and woman resolved though they wait twenty years for it to find the jewel of conjugal friendship. When Dr. Salmon's[1] . . . wife died, he said to John Dowden 'When a young man's wife dies it is not much—is nothing to what it is with an old man.' Yet Dowden, who knew them well, said he never knew them to talk to each other but once, and then it was about [household matters]. They had found the jewel and could not tell you where it was hidden; nor could any happily married couple. With people who live on the surface marriage is a failure, a grotesque absurdity, and many here are now saying so—already it is come to that.

Did the contemporaries of Shakespeare live on the surface? No! for the surface though well provided with tragedies and comedies that differed little from tragedies was poorly furnished with what modern life is so rich in. With all their uproariousness and treacheries and adulteries and profanities, they lived austerely, each man of them a lonely man, his nighest neighbour some threatening

1. A Provost of Trinity College, Dublin, and a famous mathematician. He wrote the book against Papal infallibility which Gladstone considered unanswerable.

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form of death or disease or sin, his interest not so much life itself as *what it meant*, life itself a wretched, miserable, however dreadful, spectacle. The active resolute spirit might enjoy himself as in a football scrimmage. But the others—the thinker, the artist, the man aloof who watches and sees the whole of it, and yet must because of his sensitiveness or other unfitness keep outside of it—What solace was there for him? He could not, as does the American, *admire* life—though he occasionally by good chance may have admired some of it, he recoiled from most of it. If he was to live he must escape from the surface of life, and he found his asylum in his dreams; here was his workshop where he mended life. Here also if he was a philosopher and scholar, his oracle and cave of prophecy. In modern life are no dreams, nothing but an overpowering and shining actuality and its logical processes. The dream workshop is deserted and no one visits the oracles—all are out in the crowded streets. There is another thing to be noted about Elizabethan days. Getting a living was then a comparatively easy thing; they had not that absorption to interrupt their dreams, and here again let me add, that a people who do not dream never attain to inner sincerity, for only in his dreams is a man really himself. Only for his dreams is a man responsible—his actions are what he must do. Actions are a bastard race to which a man has not given his full paternity.

People in these democratic days have learned to exult in each other and to *admire* life—yet to admire is not to love—rather does *admiration cast out love*. The recluse M. Angelo with his doctrine of the fall so vivid in his mind and Italian wickedness and its denunciation by Savonarola could not have admired life. Yet his art in which is nothing grandiose or that expresses admiration is full of his love and tremendous tenderness for the humanity that had fallen. M. Angelo bowed down by love and pity was sustained by his dreams of the resurrection and of Divine justice and of Paradise. Verily if we would restore its intensity to poetry and art we must rediscover the doctrine of the Fall (and may begin with the war and the Kaiser and his legions). When you express your admiration for the great Queen it is only to accentuate the pity of her old age—as M. Angelo pondering on the fall of man would remember his nobleness. The artist who admires is a poor artist—we know that from the portrait painters.

Do you remember the statue of General Sherman which is at the entrance

to the Central Park, by St. Gaudens—a fine sculptor, the finest in America. Here you have art characteristic of a race living on the surface. The general and his horse vividly rendered by a man of intense observation—the Victory, just a young American girl exaggerated after the manner of Gibson, a long-legged, long-armed, bright creature, the product of the American mind in high tension—observing and admiring—the wings are a mere excrescence, quite incongruous, unless indeed one fancied them to be the latest invention of the Paris milliner, to which we have not yet become accustomed. Now we know that for the medieval artist, the Victory would have been everything—General Sherman and his horse subsidiary. How Michel Angelo would have revelled in giving her the strong shoulders to support heavy full-fledged wings, an athlete, a woman and an immortal. How Michel Angelo *loved* life is visible in his moulding and carving of the human body which palpitates with a too sentient life. The Greek sculptor had not this pity, except in the Elgin marbles, and then it was not so much pity as delight in power and force. — Your affectionately — J. B. YEATS.

P.S. A certain Irishman, Capt. Freeman, formerly of the British Army, is in high glee foreseeing the downfall of the British Empire. He spent 18 years in the Balkans and professes to know everything. For 12 years he was foreign correspondent for the English *Standard*. He says the Ulster men are coming round to be of the same opinion. Of course I detest *all* Empires, *German* or English. [Sketch.]

TO LADY GREGORY

Nov. 19, 1914
317 W. 29. N. York

My dear Lady Gregory—I don't think I sufficiently acknowledged how perfectly you had the theory as you had already the practice 'from things temporal to things eternal'. I am sending you by this post a paper with a poem by Percy Mackaye on Isadore Duncan's 'children', some fifteen now housed at Rye by Mrs. Simeon Ford who is the hostess referred to in the poem. All through this poem we have the note of pain strummed lightly and dancingly—though indeed it is now strummed all around us by what is happening! and poets are saved the trouble perhaps. It is because in every poem this note must be continuously struck that we have come to consider all poetry to be something sad and mournful.

I have been very busy on an article on English character. Here are two great facts as I think of English evolution through the century—England an island and a natural fortress—hence no national army now necessary. And for third fact—no strong central government—the consequence of two preceding facts. Also England being an island was not subject to constant immigration as were the continental nations, so that the destruction of life by plagues &c. had free scope to keep population scanty securing thereby that there was never any struggle for existence. The Englishman had only one enemy, *disease*, otherwise lived free from care, for himself or for his country, no military discipline to vex and harass his days and no taxes and no government regulations of any kind, and no need to struggle for to live since, there being a small population over a wide area, each man had but to stretch out his hand to take what he needed, and like a man living in good society subject to but one control, the opinion of his neighbour legally embodied as we know in the ancient English institution of trial by jury.

Out of all comes the Englishman's feeling for liberty. Liberty is an English thought, and there it remains—it is not yet in American, French or German thought—for though he has not the idea or theory of liberty common in France and America he has, which they have not, the feeling in his blood and in his bones. An Englishman believes he has a right to do what he likes with himself, which includes his beliefs and whims, and with his property, and property includes wife and children and servants and oxen and asses and the stranger within his gates, and the Englishman is law-abiding, because law in England has for purpose the protection of property, it being the bulwark of personal liberty. Hence also the Englishman's selfishness. In his thick blood, clotted with ignorance, liberty quickly becomes selfishness—uncontrolled except by definite law—hence the Englishman of all time. Hence also that puzzle to foreigners the *British matron*, both the embodiments

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of two principles, law and selfishness —when a man has a right within the law to do what he likes with himself and his family and none of his neighbours dispute it. That strange irregular contract-breaking sprite sympathy has no chance to speak a word to sweeten his life.

The Englishman stands alone, a Goliath champion for liberty and yet because of his selfishness he destroys the liberty of others' country over which he can stretch a hand.

When an Englishman is a gentleman —a rare species and now almost extinct—he has the liberty without the selfishness, and I hail him as the most charming of companions and truest of friends, Oliver Elton for an instance. And now I come to the last link in my chain of argument. The Englishman gets his gift for poetical creation from his gift for personal liberty—he is self evolved, a law unto himself—what human nature he has is his own and made to suit his own palate—none other being consulted. That is, he has the deep sincerity piercing to the very centre of life and the principle of all things without *which Poetry does not speak to be attended to.* Other nations follow reason and their poetry is the lean music of argument and rhetoric; ideals and noble theories and all the rest, which Americans *follow after, are the enemy* plucking the unit man, the individual out of his sublime solitude to place him in this or that fraternity and be in the bonds of sympathy or antipathy with his fellows. From this noisy kingdom the English, whether boor or scholar, whether poet or not, turns away to follow imagination which is the voice of essential longing, so that his poetry—if by favour of the gods it be allowed to exist in tangible and visible form, is true poetry. We have the cries of the wild beasts and the singing of birds. English poetry is the human cry, it explains nothing, since to explain is to weaken, and that is not its purpose.

A man is most intense when alone. If he seeks company it is to lessen and relax a mood that had become intolerable. Let him keep his courage and remain alone and presently will burst from him the human cry which is poetry, the cry of a spirit at the self-same moment tormented and appeased. The Englishman is unspoiled —he does not keep much company like the efficient German or the sprightly Frenchman—at least it was so in his uncorrupted days.

This letter is really for Willie as well as for you—though my sending it to you is because of your kind words.—Yours very truly—J. B. YEATS

I would have it typed only it is so expensive.

Almanac for Fall Reading

A Sampling of Forthcoming Books

By AMY LOVEMAN

ADMIRERS of Rumer Godden will rejoice to find that her delicate art is at its best in a brief novel the scene of which is laid in India. "The River" (Little, Brown) is a slight but lovely portrayal of an English household and of the children who live so completely in harmony with the native environment. It has youth and the first dreams of girlhood to give it charm, and sudden death to lend it poignance.

★ ★

Scholem Asch has found the scene for his "East River" (Putnam) across the world from Miss Godden's book, in the New York of the 1900's. There is an intimate study here of life among the Jews and Irish of the lower East Side, focussed about the character of a crippled Jewish boy and his devout and wise father.

★ ★

Sweden first, Italy briefly, and Hungary are the background for Elizabeth Kjellberg's tale of an American-born heroine whose respect and liking for her Scandinavian husband hold her to him despite the romance she discovers abroad. "Secret the Song" (Ziff-Davis), written in the first person, has a veracity which makes it seem almost autobiographic, and gives an interesting portrayal of life in Sweden and Hungary.

★ ★

In "Rogue Elephant" (Morrow) Walter Allen has sketched a despicable character and made him both understandable but still unlikable. The novel is a brilliant and caustic satire on Oxford and Bloomsbury life.

★ ★

Robert Briffault has written a book which while depicting tragic events of recent years in Europe wanders about among its decadent aristocracy. "New Life of Mr. Martin" (Scribners) is much in the strain of the author's earlier romances.

★ ★

George and Helen Papishvily, whose "Anything Can Happen" met with so smiling a welcome, have collected some of the fanciful and fantastic legends of their native Georgia in "Yes and No Stories" (Harpers).

There's a trio of interesting anthologies in Eugene Wood's "I Wish I'd Written That" (Whittlesey) in which a group of well-known authors each picks out and explains why the selection he presents from another writer particularly appeals to him; "Furrow's End" (Greenberg), edited by David Greenberg, a collection of stories of farm life, and "Strange and Fantastic Stories" (Whittlesey) by Joseph Margolies, which is just what its title proclaims it.

★ ★

Mystery story fans will find reading to their taste in "Death of a Tall Man" (Lippincott), by Frances and Richard Lockridge, and in Vera Caspary's "Stranger Than Truth" (Random).

★ ★

There have been many books on China but few at once so brilliant, so understanding, and so illuminating as "Thunder Out of China" (Sloane Associates) by *Life* and *Time* correspondents Theodore W. White and Annalee Jacoby. From their informed discussion of what has happened in China during and after the war years emerges the actual pattern of that sorely tried country.

★ ★

A pattern of another sort, the pattern of American government as it is set in Washington by politicians, lobbyists, society, and all the elements that surround and make officialdom is drawn by Jonathan Daniels in "Frontier on the Potomac" (Macmillan). There's excellent reading in these pages thronged with personalities, conversations, and anecdotes all of which help to make vivid a study of government in action.

★ ★

The reader of Harold Nicolson's "The Congress of Vienna" (Harcourt, Brace) cannot fail to be struck by two things, the brilliance of the author's handling of his material which is enlivened by vivid vignettes of the personalities which throng the narrative, and the frequent parallels to the events of the present which are never drawn but always implicit in Mr. Nicolson's chronicle.

★ ★

The general public as well as educators in particular will find engrossing reading in Abraham Flexner's life of Daniel Coit Gilman (Harcourt,

(*Continued on page* 59)

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GEO-METRIC VERSE

Poetry Forms in Mathematics
Written mostly for Fanatics

by

Gerald Lynton Kaufman, A.I.A.

SIGH-ANGLES

TWO TRIANGLES SIGHED FOR HOWEVER THEY TRIED
THEY COULD NOT COINCIDE
FOR ONE WAS A CUTE ONE, RETIRING, RECLUSE
THE OTHER, DIFFUSE AND PROFUSELY OBTUSE

INFINITEM

INFINITY SEEMS ODD TO ME
WHAT CANNOT HAPPEN ANYWHERE, SO OFTEN HAPPENS HERE
THE REASON MAY BE QUEER

CIRCLE-ELEGEE

THE CURFEW TOLLS
THE KNELL OF PARTING DAY
THE CIRCLE REPRESENTS A SETTING SUN
THAT STARTS AN ELEGY FOR THOMAS GRAY
BUT, FOR SOME OTHERS, STARTS A ROUND OF FUN.
TURN NOW FROM GRAY, TO ARCHIMEDES' NAME
AND IF FOR MATHEMATICS YOU SHOULD CARE
THINK HOW THE LATTER CARRIED OUT HIS AIM
TO MAKE A CIRCLE EQUAL TO A SQUARE
COULD SOMEONE FOR THESE TWO AT ONCE ENGRAVE
A MEDAL, ITS DESIGN SHOULD NEVER BE
OF PATHS OF GLORY LEADING TO A GRAVE
BUT LEADING RATHER, WITH A FANCY
FREE, AROUND AND ROUND A
CIRCLE-ELEGEE

A DOGGEREL-O-PIP-E-DON

IF THIS POEM SEEMS ERRATIC DO NOT HARBOR A SUSPICION
AND ITS METRE IS ATROCIOUS THAT THE FAULT IS ACCIDENTAL
OR THE PHRASES UNGRAMMATIC NOR CONDEMN ITS POETRICIAN
MAKE A DOG-GER-EL FEROCIOUS AS A PAR-AL-LEL-E-MENTAL
BUT CONSIDER HIM A BIPED
LIKING EQUALLY THE SONNET
AND THE PAR-AL-LEL-O-PIPED
WITH A DOG-GER-EL UPON IT
OR SENTIMENTS INSIPID ON
A PAR-AL-LEL-O-PIP-E-DON

RHYTHMICROSS

A MATTER OF COURSE
IN A REGULAR CROSS
IS TO HAVE THE DIMENSIONS AGREE
BY SETTING THE LIMITS JUST RIGHT
SO THE WIDTH IS THE SAME AS THE HEIGHT
BUT IN WRITING THIS POEM, YOU SEE
HOW THE AUTHOR WAS QUITE AT A LOSS
FOR HIS VERSES COULD NEVER BE FREE
AND HIS EFFORT TO PUT THEM ACROSS
MADE THE OUTCOME AS
CROSS AS COULD BE

ANGOLET

IN
STEAD
OF WRITING
STUPID JANGLES
AND LAPSING INTO
FOSSIL EASE - I MUCH
PREFER TO WRITE TRIANGLES,
ESPECIALLY THE I-SOS-CE-LES.

CUBICOUPLETS

A CUBE HAS SIX FACES A CUBE HAS SIX PLANES
RECTANGULAR SPACES FOR METRIC REFRAINS
FOR COUPLETS LIKE THESE WITH A RHYTHM, OF COURSE
TO BE READ AS YOU PLEASE EITHER DOWN OR ACROSS
EVERY FACE IS A SQUARE EVERY EDGE IS A LINE
TO HELP YOU COMPARE TO UNITE AND COMBINE
TWO PLANES AT A TIME FROM BEHIND OR BETWEEN
IN THIS CUBICAL RHYME WITH THE VERSES UNSEEN

A CUBE HAS SIX PLANES A CUBE HAS SIX FACES
FOR METRIC REFRAINS RECTANGULAR SPACES
WITH A RHYTHM, OF COURSE FOR COUPLETS LIKE THESE
EITHER DOWN OR ACROSS TO BE READ AS YOU PLEASE
EVERY EDGE IS A LINE EVERY FACE IS A SQUARE
TO UNITE AND COMBINE TO HELP YOU COMPARE
FROM BEHIND OR BETWEEN TWO PLANES AT A TIME
WITH THE VERSES UNSEEN IN THIS CUBICAL RHYME

DACTYLLIC FRUSTUM

IT'S TERRIBLY SAD WHEN A CONE
IS FRUSTRATED AND STANDS ALL ALONE
WITH ITS APEX TRUNCATED... WHENEVER
I FIND ONE WHOSE SLOPE SEEMS INVITING
I COVER ITS SURFACE WITH METRICAL WRITING
IN CHEERFUL TETRAMETER, SOMEWHAT IDYLLIC
CAST IN A MOULD THAT IS SLIGHTLY DACTYLLIC
WHENEVER AN APEX HAS PROVEN SO FRACTILE
THE FRUSTUM HAS DEFINITE NEED OF A DACTYL
TO LIGHTEN ITS SPIRIT AND SERVE AS A TONIC
FOR MALADIES EQUALLY CHRONIC AND CONIC
EXCUSE ME, DEAR CONE, IF MY METRE IS HECTIC
SOME OF THE SYLLABLES WENT CATALECTIC

LIGHT VERSE

THE
LORD
SAID: LET
THERE BE LIGHT
AND TOM EDISON
THOUGHT THIS WAS RIGHT
NOW WE ALL WORK OR PLAY
HALF AS LONG EV'RY DAY
AND TWICE AS LONG
EVERY NIGHT

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Much-Traveled Eric Sevareid

NOT SO WILD A DREAM. By Eric Sevareid. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1946. 516 *pp.* $3.50.

Reviewed by ELMER DAVIS

THE historiography of wars has usually proceeded in three stages. First came the news; then, a few years later, the inner history and background began to be revealed in the memoirs of the generals — especially the unsuccessful generals who had to prove that it was not their fault; and, finally, with the opening of official papers to professional research, the setting down in many volumes of the verdict of history—to be reversed and re-reversed by later ages, partly because intellectual premises change and partly because new generations of historians have to make their reputations at the expense of their predecessors. In due course we shall reach that stage with regard to the Eighth World War, unless by that time the Ninth is keeping people too busy to write history or to read it; but this time the second stage is different; instead of the memoirs of generals we have the memoirs of war correspondents. No doubt the generals will in due time write their apologias—the bad ones at least, the good ones may be too tired; but the correspondents have beaten them to the market, and not many generals are likely to be believed after what the correspondents have said about them.

All these books stem from Vincent Sheean's "Personal History" as all nineteenth-century Russian literature stemmed from Gogol's "Overcoat." I have not read Sheean's classic, nor by any means all its successors; but of those I have read this book by Eric Sevareid is the best. Sevareid, who worked in France, England, Mexico, Brazil, India, China, and Italy for the Columbia Broadcasting System, has written a long report which will pay out the reader no matter from what viewpoint he may approach it. Far the largest part of the book is reporting, and first-rate reporting, both of action and of those rear areas which were apt to be the uglier aspects of war. (The generals, by the way, do not come off so badly. Sevareid's opinion of Mark Clark is about as low as Ingersoll's opinion of Montgomery; and he thinks poorly of most of the top brass of the Italian campaign. But he has great respect for Stilwell, Mountbatten, Eisenhower, and above all Marshall. Here you get the feel of the long dreadful grind up the mountainous spine of Italy (once known, in one of Mr. Churchill's less happy phrases, as the soft under-belly of the axis); the thrill of rapid and successful advance in the far better organized campaign of the Seventh Army in southern France; the Burma jungle where Sevareid crashed and lived among the head hunters; as well as stagnation in Chungking, and the unpleasing aspects of war in such rear areas as Naples and New Delhi.

There is also the spiritual autobiography of a young man in the pure tradition of Northwestern isolationist radicalism who gradually learned better. Sevareid claims that he and his friends understood fascism and its menace far earlier and far better than most Americans, but they thought the Europeans could take care of it without our having to do anything about it. A reviewer who was affected by the same fallacy until May 1940 cannot reproach them for that; and they did learn, as some of our more ponderous thinkers do not seem to have learned even yet. The autobiography may be familiar stuff to Sevareid's contemporaries but has its interest for a man of my age as an explanation of a generation, perplexing in its day, a little older than his children; indeed some of the contemporaries may derive edification from the history of Sevareid's undergraduate days at the University of Minnesota—far more in the European student tradition than in that of American college life. And finally you will find recurrent commentaries on the behavior of different nations under varying degrees of pressure, which is raw material for any man's reflection in an age when we cannot be sure that even greater pressure may not some day be applied.

What most impressed this reviewer, however, was the appallingly vivid recreation of the terrible year 1940—the hour when heaven was falling, the day when earth's foundation fled. Sevareid saw about as much of it as one man could have seen—in France until the collapse, in England through the decisive period of resistance and the beginning of the winter blitz; and then in the United States, where the war was really being decided. He had seen Frenchmen going to the front in September 1939; "they did not look like soldiers beginning a war, they looked like soldiers at the end of a war"—Edmond Taylor's "Hamlets in uniform." Yet, like everybody else, he supposed that those men would beat the Germans, until the Germans beat them. In retrospect he thinks that "it was not true that the French did not think their country worth fighting for; they wished to avoid defeat, but they had no particular wish to win a war. Their last experience had taught them that there is no such thing as true victory for civilized men who have no desire to conquer others. Their tragedy was that they had reached a high point of human progress too soon."

Then England, which saved not only Europe but herself by her example. "She showed the world a face it had not seen before in this

—*H. Jackson, U.S.M.C.*

"Sevareid thinks the war was won on the playing fields of American high schools . . . 'the conviction . . . that one does not let the team down'."

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war; the spirit of the British called up from despair the spirit of other men," and gradually the underground of all Europe looked to London as its headquarters. But a man who was there knew how narrow the margin of survival had been, and wondered how long that margin could be maintained. Sevareid came home that fall and almost lost hope in Washington, where the "tobacco-chewing, gravy-stained, overstuffed gila monsters" in Congress were still talking about George III (and some of them had been the heroes, even the friends, of his youth) . . . Yet eventually America won the war. The British had saved us all from losing it in 1940, as did the Russians in 1942; but we finally had to supply the knockout wallop.

How did this miracle happen? Remembering 1940 (and you will relive that year as you read Sevareid) it is hard to realize that it happened at all—especially as the defeatists and dissensionists who flourished then lowered their voices only a very little when the shooting was on. They did not manage to lose the war, but they and their transmission belts in Congress achieved this much success, that most of America went to war not knowing quite what it was about. Yet men in this confused state of mind, fighting far away with their homes in no immediate danger, became an excellent army, a professional army, and won the war. Why?

Sevareid thinks the war was won on the playing fields of American high schools. "It was the team spirit, the conviction bred in their bones that one does not let the team down; a pride in their outfits, the sheer American pride in competence." We may have been, as Chancellor Hutchins said, intellectually (and spiritually) unprepared for war; but we had to fight it and we won it by reflex action. (Also there was a man named Roosevelt, whose remains the hyenas are still trying to dig up and kick around; it might pay you to read what Sevareid says about him, especially on page 194.)

But it takes more than reflex action to cash in on victory, to establish —even in so far as one nation can establish it—security and peace. In various theatres Sevareid was perturbed by the bad manners of American soldiers, by their ignorance of and indifference to the peoples among whom they lived; he was more deeply perturbed by the shift in American policy illustrated by the Darlan episode. (His explanation of that episode is inadequate; it was more than a matter of "politically neutral" generals and encrusted diplomats; but this is not the time, nor the space, to go further into it.) And in due

course he was further perturbed by the atomic bomb.

The Northwestern isolationists had "believed that war itself was the greatest of all evils, not the results if the war were lost." Sevareid and his contemporaries (though not their mentors) outgrew that. "If I had learned anything I had learned that the decisive desire of men is not for peace, but for life in dignity. But now, since the month of August, the margin was closed; civilized men could not again trade peace for life in dignity without losing both dignity and life." So what do you get if you trade dignity for peace? Is peace the term for a life punctuated by domiciliary visits, and interludes of protective custody? Sevareid ought to know; he knew men who had lived, and men who had died, under Vichy.

Between the atomic bomb and the post-war behavior of the Russians Sevareid got himself pretty well discouraged. "There remained only one source of material strength and moral force sufficient to tip the balance and alter the course of events in the only direction that men of good will could recognize and follow. That source was my own country . . . America could still work greatly to create a world in its own great image, but if the result was to be one to capture the allegiance of the confraternity of good will, America would also have to work greatly upon herself."

Nobody could argue much with that? If you think so, listen to this fall's campaign speeches. The morning cometh, and also the night; if ye will inquire, inquire ye.

Rear Echelon Base

By Kimball Flaccus

TO those of us who come to Kodiak
From arduous island duty farther west,
This place seems fine at first; we think it heaven,
Deem ourselves lucky lads to be so blessed.

Instead of mud, foul water, reeking stoves—
Luxurious beds, clean linen, shower and tub;
No blackout here, and no long womanless months.
A dance is held each Saturday at the club.

After a look around, you hit your stride,
Waging a stubborn fight to get things done;
You know that by ten million small details
Performed correctly, victory is won.

One day you hear: "Say, let me put you wise—"
The voice is jocular, the manner breezy—
"You work too hard; by getting out of step
You show us fellows up. Just take it easy."

How answer one so ignorant and so false?
What can you say to this? Nothing to say;
Let the fool make his point and preach his sermon.
Your stomach retches and you turn away.

You think of those out west who keep the faith,
And hold the fort on sand or desolate rock,
Where williwaws snatch planes out of the sky
And tear great ships from anchorage or dock.

Remembering drifts that mount before your eyes,
You think how good it was, not long ago,
Exhausted, staggering, leaning on the storm,
To win safe shelter from the blinding snow.

Sweet was that life for all its jeopardy,
Priceless and irreplaceable the chance
To stand beside brave men in comradeship,
Sharing the struggle and the slow advance.

Later, you smile a bit at what you see:
Bound for the dance, and radiating charm,
Goes forth to war the Kodiak commando,
His Civil Service lady on his arm.

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Mr. Welles on Foreign Policy

WHERE ARE WE HEADING? By Sumner Welles. New York: Harper and Bros. 1946. 390 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by THOMAS K. FINLETTER

THIS is Mr. Welles's report on the doings of the American foreign policy makers since 1944 when Mr. Welles's previous book, "The Time for Decision," was published. The report is very interesting and very unfavorable.

The United States had a great opportunity, in mid-summer 1944, to lead the world to peace and decency. Mr. Welles believes that this opportunity has been frittered away, in large part because of the death of President Roosevelt. An epoch ended when he died. "His unique qualifications were replaced by sincerity, a devoted patriotism and the best of intentions but these were backed unfortunately by neither knowledge, experience nor strength."

Some good things have been done. The United Nations has come into being and we have supported it. We have taken the lead in establishing the long term financial agencies of UN, the International Bank and the International Monetary Fund, and have given a helping hand to world economy by the British and French loans. President Truman and Mr. Byrnes have used their cordial relations with the Senate to take our foreign policy out of partisan politics and to make it, with the help of Senator Vandenberg and other Republican leaders, a bi-partisan national policy.

Against these good things Mr. Welles lists an appalling number of failures —a list which "must represent a cause for increasing anxiety to every American citizen." The Administration's handling of Latin-American affairs has all but wrecked the Good Neighbor Policy. . . . Our attempts to prevent a civil war in China have failed. . . . We are deceiving ourselves about our Japanese policy. The docile acceptance by the Japanese of General MacArthur's orders may be the calm before the storm; and by refusing to let the other powers share in running Japan, we have failed to create a unified Allied policy—a bad omen for the future holding down of the Japanese. . . . Our failure to get a Four Power agreement on Germany before the war ended has made of the German problem the greatest threat of all to European reconstruction and world peace. . . . We have forfeited our place as the champion of small nations by agreeing to Big Power domination of the peace making. . . . We have failed to show any moral leadership on issues such as Palestine and the future of colonial peoples. . . . We have failed to find a basis for agreement with the Soviet Union.

Having made the reader want to jump out the window with this list of specific failures, Mr. Welles makes a general and even more serious indictment. We have, he says, abandoned the great principles of the Atlantic Charter and the Yalta Agreement by which we guaranteed to all peoples, and to Poland, Rumania, Bulgaria, and Hungary, in particular, the right to choose the form of government under which they will live, and freedom from territorial changes that do not accord with the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned. This betrayal, Mr. Welles says, has left us without any guiding ideal; our foreign policy is purely opportunistic.

"Is American foreign policy without an anchor of principle?" Sumner Wells, former Undersecretary of State to Cordell Hull, considers this question in his new book.

Mr. Welles is not alone in saying that the Western democracies have abandoned their principles. The London *Economist* recently remarked that the Paris Peace Conference is regarded by the world with no emotion loftier than a mixture of cynicism and resignation. The cause, says the *Economist,* is deeper than any temporary failure of the statesmen; the moral code of the West is in collapse. Through the centuries Western society had built up a body of moral and political principles of which the core was respect for human personality. The Atlantic Charter was an expression of this code. We did not always live up fully to its requirements, but the trend was in the right direction. Now, the *Economist* fears, the trend is reversed; we are letting our Western values go by default.

How true is this accusation? Have we abandoned the defense of Western values? Is American foreign policy without an anchor of principle?

There is no doubt that, as Mr. Welles says, the American delegation at the Second Conference of Foreign Ministers at Moscow in December 1945 reversed its former position of insisting that Russia comply with the provisions of Yalta—a position which had broken up the First Conference of Foreign Ministers at London in September 1945 in a strident quarrel. It is also true that the Yalta provisions for freely elected governments in Poland, Rumania, Bulgaria, and Hungary are not being carried out and that we are not doing much about it. But it does not follow that we have thereby abandoned the defense of Western values or that our present policy is unprincipled.

The only way in which we could have held Russia to strict compliance with her Yalta promise was by our being ready to risk a complete showdown, with consequences we can only guess at; for Russia meant business and did not intend to yield the Balkans to the Western zone of influence, which the fulfillment of Yalta might have meant. The American people would not have stood for their government taking a position which was as dangerous as that, and the government had no alternative but to give way. But this does not mean that the principle of spreading self-rule

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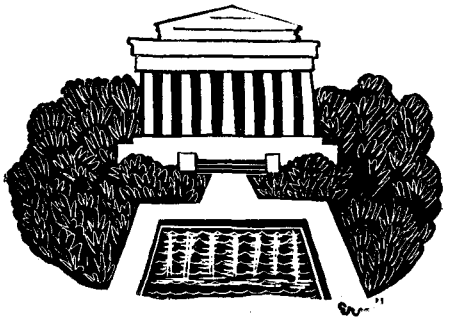
(*i.e.* Western values) throughout the world is no longer a part of our foreign policy. What it means is that we recognize that the ideology of democracy and the ideology of communism are competing political weapons, and when applied in areas close to the other fellow's home (the Balkans in one case, the Western Hemisphere in another) are necessarily irritating and explosive. We therefore have to decide in each particular case how far we can press the export of democracy.

But this does not answer the substance of Mr. Welles's charge—that our foreign policy is not based on clearly defined, consistently held principles. Particularly do we lack such policies in the purely political field, that is in those matters which have to do with the organization of world society and the maintenance of peace. In commercial matters the United States has a definite and idealistic line—getting rid of barriers to trade, industrializing and otherwise developing backward areas, and backing the International Bank and the International Fund. In the matter of social justice we have a satisfactory policy —to support the trusteeship provisions of the UN Charter by which dependent peoples will be protected during trusteeship and will be prepared for eventual self government. In the realm of ideas we are doing our best to break down the barriers to the interchange of information and of thought between nations. But where our policies are weak is in the purely political field. For here the American people have been offered, so far, only the old rules of the old game of zones of influence and power politics. And, facing the new inventions of science, the armaments race already under way, and the historical fact of the inevitability of war among independent sovereign states which are not subject to any overall law, this seems definitely not good enough.

At the moment the guiding political policy of the United States Government is to hold the line against Russia. At all the crucial points, in Germany, Trieste, Greece, the Dardenelles, the Middle East, and China, the policy is to limit the extension of the Soviet zone of influence. This is no doubt a good policy. But it is not a solution of anything. It is only a tactical holding operation to give us the opportunity to work out something at a higher level of principle.

No doubt there are many things to be done; for a foreign political policy must be made up of many principles, of varying importance and time-priority. The provisions of the Atlantic Charter and of Yalta must remain on the list. The extension of



the United States zone of influence and resistance to expansion of the Soviet zone should also be continued for the present. The Good Neighbor policy should be revived and extended, as was originally intended, to countries outside this hemisphere. And so on—all discussed most interestingly in Mr. Welles's book. But there is another policy—more important and more urgent than any of these—which must, I believe, be adopted vigorously by our Government if any of these other things are to be possible. That policy is (1) to amend the UN Charter so as to make of UN a government of limited powers, enforcing a rule of law to limit armaments and prohibit war, and (2) to put our full weight back of the Baruch Proposals to the Atomic Energy Commission because those Proposals do in fact call for such a regime of law.

Mr. Welles discusses these two propositions, approves both, and then rejects them as not practical politics. He has no doubt that some day "the anarchy of unrestrained nationalism will give place to an international federalism; some day the spiritual and political liberty of the individual will be consecrated by universal law," and he regards the Baruch Proposals as highly constructive, wholly enlightened, and practical. But the trouble is Russia. Mr. Welles believes that Russia will never accept the rule of law and therefore we must abandon it.

There is no space here to go into this much debated question; for the answer of the opponents of world law is in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, Russia. But the by now orthodox answers to this argument may be given. How does anyone know what Russia would do if something were offered to her which has never yet been offered, and since when has the United States decided to gear its foreign policy to the lowest common denominator of what it guesses will be acceptable to other powers? Is that principle? Is that the ideal which is to guide the American people in their new venture in foreign affairs? Would it not be better to examine the idea of a regime of law on the merits and, if we find it good, try to persuade the world to adopt it?

Aid to Poets

NEWTON DEMANDS THE MUSE: Newton's Opticks *and the Eighteenth Century Poets. By Marjorie Hope Nicolson. Princeton: Princeton University Press.* 1946. 177 *pp.* $2.

Reviewed by ERIC BENTLEY

STUDENTS of literature are generally frightened of science. Many of them major in English at college because English sounds like the easiest subect and the most unscientific. Later, as professional scholars, they lecture their pupils and colleagues on the dangers of the scientific outlook and at the same time show themselves jealous of the scientists by reducing the study of literature to "scientific" research.

But Marjorie Hope Nicolson was not frightened. On the contrary, her interest in both science and literature has provided her with an unusual scholarly equipment. And, as her students at Smith and Columbia have discovered, she adds to the equipment a special gift for explaining science even to the unreceptive minds of the literati. Readers of *SRL* may have made the same discovery by reading her "Microscope and English Imagination" or her "World in the Moon."

The subject of "Newton Demands the Muse" sounds forbidding. It is the influence of Sir Isaac Newton's now forgotten treatise "Opticks" on English literature in the eighteenth century, especially on such poems as Young's "Night Thoughts," Akenside's "The Pleasures of Imagination," Thomson's "Seasons," and such esthetic treatises as Addison's "Pleasures of the Imagination" and Burke's "Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful."

However, by the plan of relating her material to the main currents of thought in her period, Miss Nicolson gives her book an interest for all students of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. I shall not try to summarize Miss Nicolson's findings here but shall be content to recommend particularly her chapter "Metaphysical Implications," which enriches our understanding of the eighteenth-century mind in general, and her epilogue on William Blake, which gave me a much more precise notion than I had ever had before of what lies behind the Romantic hatred of Newton and of Newtonianism.

Congratulations are due to the Princeton University Press on this second volume in its History of Ideas Series.

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How to Deal with Russia

THE GREAT CHALLENGE. By Louis Fischer. New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce. 1946. 346 *pp.* $4.

Reviewed by EDGAR ANSEL MOWRER

LOUIS FISCHER is one of the very few of the innumerable American writers on foreign politics who understand thoroughly what they are talking about. Everything he says makes sense. It is a delight to be able to agree with him. It is instructive to find oneself in disagreement.

If all adult Americans could be persuaded to read "The Great Challenge," American foreign policy would be clear and consistent. If Henry Wallace had read and understood this book, he would not now be getting out of the cabinet in order to be free to push a completely unrealistic policy of appeasement of Soviet Russia. For anyone capable of thought would have to refute Mr. Fischer's facts about the Soviet Union before permitting himself to embark upon a policy of sentimental "friendship" with a country where "people" do not count and where the government has no sentiment in its nature. Unhappily, Mr. Wallace is not moved by facts but by "intuitions," some of them penetrating, others simply silly.

"The Great Challenge" is basically an analysis of the world as it emerged from the war. "It is clear that Russian expansion constitutes the world's major problem. Expansion leads to war." This much is obvious to intelligent students of international affairs. Mr. Fischer goes farther. Out of his unequalled experience of the Soviet Union and nearly thirty years' study of that country, he tells why.

He makes hash of the cliché that the Soviets are expanding because Russia is "afraid" and "suspicious" of the democracies. When the Russians were really weak and afraid they were anything but aggressive. "Russia," Fischer points out, "is not afraid and not suspicious for two clear reasons: the British Empire is in decline and on the defensive; America rushed from victory to headlong psychological and military demobilization. Nobody else could attack Russia. . . . Russia's behavior is explained not by fear of an attack but rather by her certainty that she will not be attacked."

Here is sense indeed. Soviet aggression antedated the discovery of the atomic bomb which therefore had no part in Stalin's decision to resume a pre-war policy of hostility toward his wartime allies.

Another exploded cliché — Moscow has "liberated" the "oppressed" peoples of eastern Europe. "Moscow boasts that it has swept away the physical debris of feudalism in eastern and central Europe. But it has substituted a new political and intellectual serfdom that is at least as bad."

Louis Fischer: "Russia's behavior is explained not by fear of attack but by certainty that she will not be attacked."

Extremely interesting is Fischer's analysis of why Roosevelt and Churchill consented to feed their ally's inordinate appetites at the expense of the common victory. This he attributes primarily to their fear that if they crossed the man who double-crossed the democracies in 1939, he might double-cross them again and make a separate peace with Hitler. "That would have meant the prolongation of the war and a horrible rise in American and British, as well as other, casualties."

Therefore an inevitable surrender? No. Fischer states (and this reviewer agrees emphatically) that "Roosevelt and Churchill did not have to surrender as abjectly to Stalin as they did in Teheran and Yalta. There was even less reason for the surrender at Potsdam in August 1945, when Germany had fallen and Japan was about to reel under two American atomic bombs." (The reason was, of course, that Mr. Truman, then, like Mr. Wallace today, had been carried away by the erroneous clichés about Soviet motives.)

To me, perhaps the most interesting feature in a book so packed with interesting observations and analysis that no brief review can do it justice, is Fischer's prescription on how to deal with the Soviets, avoid Soviet expansion, and avoid war. It goes something like this:

Soviet democracy is of course phony —"the kind that is administered by a secret police, by one party, and by a dictator." But unlike Hitler, who could count only on force, Russia is Peter the Great plus Karl Marx. However perverted by Moscow, Marx "still represents the revolt against what is rotten in the status quo." Therefore Russia's challenge is not only a challenge to our manliness . . . it is "a challenge to improve or succumb."

"It does not matter that the challenger has more room for improvement than the challenged." Those who listen to him do not know this and are deprived of most means of finding it out. Churchill's military alliance challenge to "Stop Russia!" can handle the military threat. "But how could that alliance or the UN keep Moscow from tearing at the inner social and political structure of foreign countries?" Fischer asks. Only by social improvement at home, the end of imperialism and "conscious ideological competition with Russia," which is a "substitute for war with Russia. . . . A foreign policy based on conscious ideological competition with Russia will improve the chances of peace, check the inroads of totalitarian thinking among liberals, fortify democracy, raise standards of living and give the free world a much-needed moral lift."

Here is the crux of the world situation. This is why democratic attempts to utilize against Russia shady characters like Peron of Argentina, Franco of Spain, King George of Greece, former German nationalists, the Nazi mufti of Jerusalem and the petty Arab tyrants, even Salazar of Portugal, do not strengthen but weaken the democratic cause. Against Stalin as Peter the Great they may be effective. But they justify and thereby strengthen "Stalin as Marx."

Such ideological competition "is a substitute for war with Russia. If the democracies win, there will be no war, there will be no war ever, there will be a world government which ultimately will include Russia. If Russia wins there will be no democracies."

This is such a perfect analysis of the world situation that I would like to have it read over all the radio chains in all America three times a day. For it is on this basis that I differ with Mr. Wallace and the numerous prophets of woe who are bulking ever larger on the national horizon. To read "The Great Challenge" understandingly is to become an optimist. For the democracies still possess the means of winning the ideological competition. It only remains to make them want to.

Do I find no faults in Fischer's

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book? Yes. Minor ones. I do not go along with Mr. Fischer in his belief that "Germany cannot start another war." I think that permitting Germany to remain strong through fear of Russia will mean that a strong Germany will later play Russia off against the democracies and thereby ultimately recover power to threaten the world.

For, to my mind, streamlining the democracies for the ideological struggle with Russia means permanently weakening Germany by accepting something like the French plan for the Ruhr. Europe—with the single exception of Ruhr coal—could quite well get along without Germany (and would probably like to). It is not true that "a sick Germany will make a sick Europe." Germany—as the Nazis demonstrated—had grown to be a tumor in the European body. Reduction by surgery is essential to European equilibrium.

Finally, Fischer makes an admirable argument against the great power veto that hamstrings the United Nations. He favors immediately setting up an international government among truly peace-loving powers—even if Russia stays out.

Why the Japanese Are "Liked"

RECONQUEST: ITS RESULTS AND ITS RESPONSIBILITIES. By Hallett Abend. New York: Doubleday & Co. 1946. 305 pp. $2.75.

Reviewed by DAVID L. COHN

IN the summer of 1945, Hallet Abend was one of a group of thirteen writers whom the War Department put aboard a C-54 plane in Washington and sent around a world at war. They went plush—a seat for every person, and another for his typewriter. Why a party of writers differing in experience, interests, and the periodicals whom they represented should be sent to see the same things is a Pentagon mystery. "Reconquest" is Mr. Abend's account of what he saw, and what he thinks of the world.

It is an excellent account; best when the writer, a former *New York Times* correspondent in the Far East, and an old China hand, is writing about the Orient. Whisked around the world by the Air Transport Command, he pays his respects to that extraordinary organization. "Early in June 1945 the ATC was launching a passenger or cargo plane from Casablanca for flight across the Atlantic at twelve-minute intervals. . . . At the same time planes were leaving the United States at twelve-minute intervals for Casablanca. . . . It also operated a great chain of hotels and transient billets. In six months, in the North African division alone, 578,000 passengers were billeted. . . . Total ATC routes, all over the world, approximated 166,000 miles in length at war's end."

Similarly, Mr. Abend devotes a chapter to the fantastic accomplishments of Americans who flew the Hump from India to China; an almost impossible route first established to deliver lend-lease materials to China when the Burma Road was closed. So urgent were the needs the Hump flyers served that weather, by official fiat, was ruled out. Over the Hump, at a huge cost of lives and treasure, we lost nearly 1800 planes. But materials went through, despite the wailings of Lin Yutang and others that we were letting China down. And as many an ex-GI will tell you, large quantities of them were lost to China's armies through the corruption of Chinese officialdom.

At this time, a great many of our soldiers are returning from the Orient saying that they "like" the Japanese better than the Chinese. (In Europe, they "like" the Germans better than the French or the British.) Aware of the dangers of such an attitude and of the abysmal ignorance of things Japanese that produces it, Mr. Abend devotes the greater part of his book to a "brief outline of Japan's ancient history and an exposé of the methods which brought about the empire's modern rise to power by the use of trickery, deception, and false promises. . . ." This "in order to clarify the grave problem of reeducating the Japanese people, and the difficulty of the problem of keeping them mentally contrite and physically incapable of attempting a war of revenge while reeducation is making slow progress."

The Germans and the Japanese are, says Mr. Abend, alike in many ways. But they are especially similar in one quality which causes our ignorant soldiers to prefer them to their late friends the Chinese, the French, the British. They pass without the slightest difficulty from sadism to masochism. Brutal and arrogant when winning, they are bootlicking and servilely obsequious when losing. And now that they are down, they kiss the boot that lately kicked them. They are, then, in the minds of our soldiers, polite, accommodating, and agreeable, by contrast with our late allies who, being free men, act like free men. Mr. Abend, conscious of our incredible political naïveté, goes to great pains, through his lessons in Japanese history and character, to say—"Don't believe 'em!"

I hope this book will be read by our occupation armies overseas, and some of their fellow Americans at home. It might be helpful in closing the disastrous gulf between our brilliant technical competence and our almost incredible political ineptitude. But I despair of it. War books, it appears, are a drug on the market. We won the last war, didn't we? And, by God, we'll win the next one. The next war, besides, in keeping with our almost pathological progress all along the line, will be bigger than the last one. A big country such as ours must, in keeping with its size, make big mistakes. This desirable goal becomes all the easier if we remain studiedly ignorant by refusing to read war books—including Mr. Abend's.

FRASER YOUNG'S LITERARY CRYPT: NO. 173

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 173 will be found in the next issue.

DAOG LJ LG GAIT GU AOEI

UK AOEI TU DLWI, HFG

JLTZRI GAKORVUS, UK O

VUFHRI JGKLWI?—GAI

DUKRV.—WKOTPLJ HOPUT.

Answer to Literary Crypt No. 172

No people do so much harm as those who go about doing good.
MANDELL CREIGHTON
Life, 1904.

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A Spoon River in Photographs

THE INHABITANTS. By Wright Morris. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1946. *Unpaginated.* $3.75.

Reviewed by ROGER BUTTERFIELD

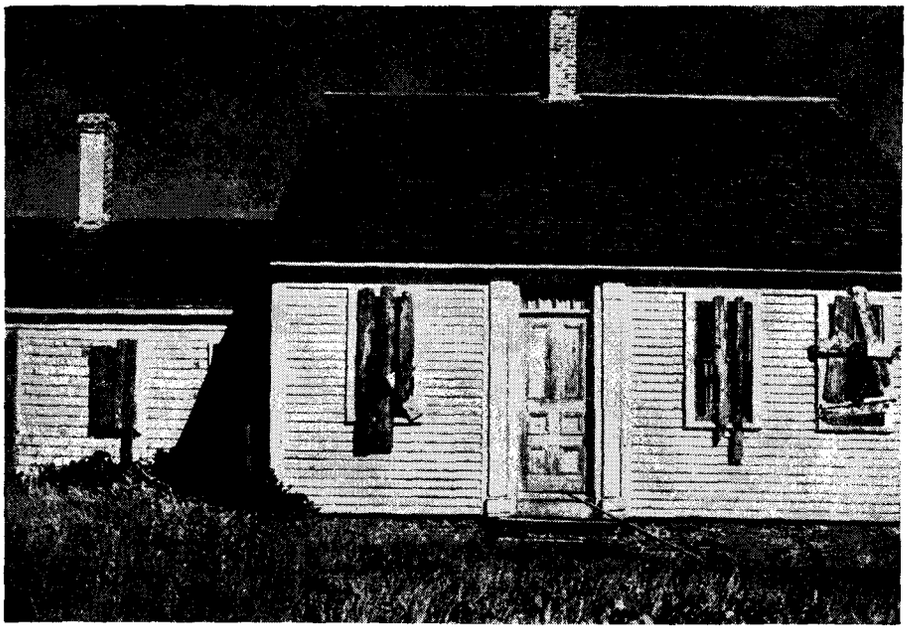
THERE are in this book 52 of the most exciting photographs of the contemporary American scene that I have ever seen gathered together. Mr. Morris's pictures are clean, sharp, honest, and very far removed from the romanticized grist of the picture magazines and advertising agencies. He has produced here a kind of Spoon River in photographs, with the whole country for his field instead of one small town. There is not a single human being in these pictures. Yet they are alive with human whisperings and shadows, with hopes that came true and dreams that didn't.

Mr. Morris has taken both his title and his theme from a passage in Thoreau's "Walden"—"What of architectural beauty I now see, I know has gradually grown from within outward, out of the necessities and character of the indweller, who is the only builder . . . it is the life of the inhabitants whose shells they are." These pictures, then, are the "shells" of Americans who have lived and struggled and passed on. They are pictures of old weatherbeaten houses, white churches, rusty grain elevators and barns, brick storefronts in a village street. Some of them show no more than the corner of a well-worn staircase, or a sagging lawn-swing on a grassless front lawn. Mr. Morris achieves remarkable effects with such small details. But he is never solely interested in abstract patterns—he does not belong to the "sand-and-water" school of photography. What he gives us is the effect that wood and stone pavements and back yards have had on human beings—and the effect that human beings have had on them. How he does this is impossible to explain in words. It is a special kind of art, and you must see his pictures to understand it.

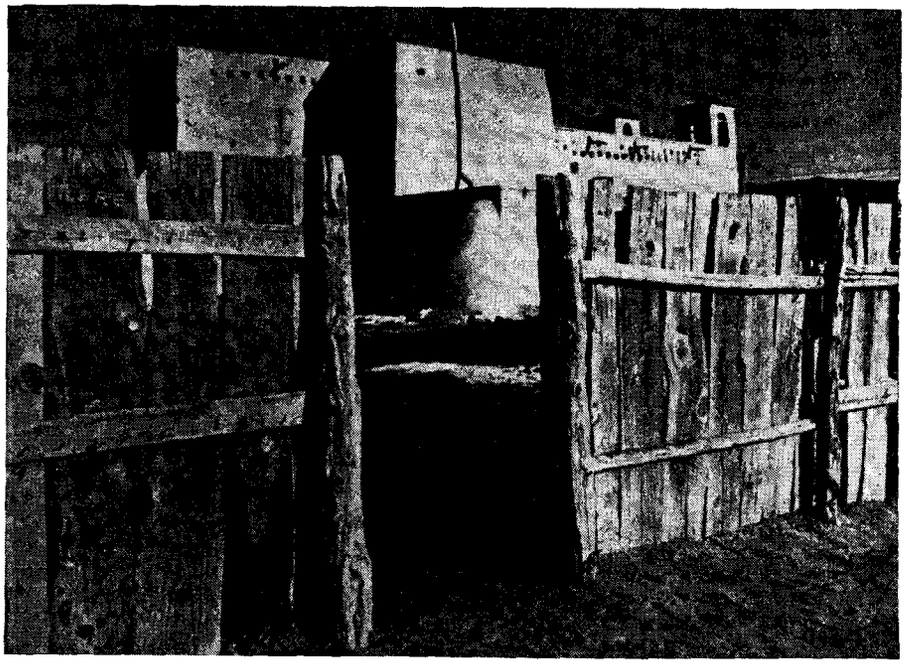
Running alongside the pictures, on alternate pages, Mr. Morris gives us a written commentary that does not describe the pictures at all, but is keyed to the mood they create. This "sound-track" is all about people but not necessarily the people who might have been in the pictures. It includes snatches of conversation and autobiography, short character sketches, bits of free verse and straight reportage, strung together in a loose style reminiscent of John Dos Passos's "Camera Eye." In other words Mr. Morris has tackled the old problem of "text" in a picture book in a thoroughly different and challenging way. From statements on the jacket of his book it appears that this might even be considered a new art form—"a startling fusion of photographs and words."

To this reviewer the fusion does not come off, although there are written passages in the book which are as fresh and vivid as the photographs themselves. Yet, in the end, the words and pictures stay apart. The book remains primarily a collection of fascinating photographs which can be relied upon to create their own strong impression on any reader. But there is this to be said for the text and the way it is arranged—never in any way does it *detract* from the impact of the pictures. That in itself is an achievement.

It takes real courage these days to break away from the stale "captions and text" pattern that has been forced on many good picture books by the all-pervading influence of picture journalism. Mr. Morris has shown such courage. So have his publishers. They have opened up a new path to other photographers and authors (Mr. Morris is both) who feel there is a real field for artistic expression in the combining of pictures and words, and have produced one of the best picture books of our times.



What Wright Norris "gives us is the effect that wood and stone pavements . . .



. . . have had on human beings—and the effect that human beings have had on them."

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GOD'S COMMITMENTS

MY FRIEND the farmer folded his hands on the top of his rake and listened carefully as I argued the case for world government. Trying to sound as casual and unrehearsed as possible, I went into the usual atomic-bomb-control-power-law-government routine. With a final flourish, I dangled the vision of an apocalyptic war over his head as the almost certain alternative to world law.

He unfolded his hands and rubbed his chin thoughtfully for a brief moment.

"There's no argument against world government," he said, "and if what you're trying to do is to get me to join something, fine, count me in for what it's worth. But even agreeing with you that it's world government or bust, some things have been happening lately that make me think maybe it's going to be bust. I don't mean the Paris Conference or anything like that. The real drive for world government won't come from the diplomats. They're not going to give up anything unless they really have to. And they won't have to unless the people at home let them know they are ready.

"Are the people—and by people I mean not only individual citizens but the organized groups they belong to and work in—are the people ready for it? That is what I had in mind a moment ago when I said a lot of things were happening outside regular diplomacy that made me think getting a real union of peoples may not come in time to avoid this atomic war you've been describing like a tired professional lecturer at the end of a long trip.

"Take one thing that's been happening on this business of union—and it's got nothingto do with international politics. I happen to be an Episcopalian. Maybe the Episcopalians who go to church a lot more often than I do would laugh when I call myself that, but that's not important. One thing we've been talking about for a long time in our church is whether all the Episcopalians ought to come together with all the Presbyterians in a real union. After all, we're all Christians.

"Well, we've been talking about it for years. I think it was back in 1937 that we even had a general convention to decide to see what could be done. And the Presbyterians have been working at it just as long.

"Finally, by hammering away at it constantly, people in both churches succeeded in getting a joint committee together to work out a plan for union. That was back in 1943. Since then, the joint committee has met from time to time but not much happened until just a few weeks ago when it finally came up with a proposed plan.

"Now the interesting thing about this plan is that many of the Episcopal members of the joint committee refused to go along with it and denounced it. They all signed a report saying it was practically sinful for the two churches to come together under that plan. They said, as I remember it, that it wasn't right in the sight of God even to consider this plan and that the mind of Christ himself would find it repugnant—if I remember the words they used.

"Now, that is pulling a pretty long bow. I'm an Episcopalian, but I still don't think that's enough to make me an expert on what is going on in the mind of Christ. But if I had to bet on it, I'd hesitate a long time before saying He'd be offended by the idea of two Christian denominations coming together.

"Incidentally, there must be a lot of inside information going around these days about God's preferences. I read where the people of Brooklyn were saying that God had chosen the Dodgers to win the National League pennant, and there was communion with the Lord on the steps of the Brooklyn City Hall every day just in case He wouldn't cause the Dodgers to win without their praying for it. Meanwhile, I suppose there were a lot of good Christians out in St. Louis, too, who saw no reason why the Lord shouldn't favor the Cardinals, who had the better pitching, anyway.

"Maybe I ought to be read out of the Church for even mentioning the minority report in the same breath with the Brooklyn Dodgers, but both groups seemed to feel strongly enough about their positions to commit the Lord, who certainly doesn't take His commitments lightly.

"What will happen now on the matter of union between the Episcopalians and the Presbyterians? My guess is that nothing will happen. The Presbyterians, who have a few ideas of their own about Christ's disposition, were so offended by the minority report of the Episcopalians that they're now talking of scrapping the plan altogether. If there's any spurning to do, they want to get there first. I read where one Presbyterian minister says that it may be difficult for the Episcopalians ever again to persuade other Protestant groups of their good faith. Meanwhile, so far as the Episcopalians themselves are concerned, it looks very much as though we are not only not going to unite with the Presbyterians but we may find it hard to keep united among ourselves. The whole question of getting together with the Presbyterians has caused us to fall out.

"Now the point I am trying to make is that if you can't unite two branches of the same religion, how can you expect to unite some fifty nations of a suspicious world? And I repeat that it can't be done by the diplomats until you can get enough of a spirit of compromise in enough people, getting them to understand why getting together is important and how they are to go about getting together."

"How do you think this can be done?" I asked.

"Don't ask me, brother; a little while ago you sounded as though you knew all the answers." N. C.

When Yellow Leaves

By Dilys Bennett Laing

NOW in the maple tree the phoenix roosts:
bird of September flame
that shall ignite the landscape. Where he rests
we see the summer dream
curl like a snapshot thrown in the lit hearth—
burnt leaf of the green past.
The phoenix settles in his nest of death
to hatch his holocaust.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Perils of Prediction

SIR: We were naturally delighted to have Mr. Cartmell take public notice of *Life's* long-standing interest in books and the book business in your September 14 issue. But, as he himself said, "One always has to be a little careful in making predictions about *Life*"—and in this case his predictions were rather wide of the mark.

May I set the record straight for him and for *The Saturday Review*? In the first place, while *Life's* desire to introduce its readers to important, amusing, or otherwise newsworthy books and authors is certainly as keen as ever, we have no current plans for anything so ambitious—or so departmentalized—as the "substantial book section" Mr. Cartmell mentions. There are simply not enough books that lend themselves to varied and exciting photographic treatment to warrant a regular book section in a magazine so heavily dedicated to pictures. Moreover, the very book Mr. Cartmell mentions illustrates the problems we run into when we try to cover books in blocks of text. We did indeed play around with a condensation of Robert Penn Warren's "All the King's Men," but finally gave up in despair, convinced that no cut version would give a faithful picture of the original.

May I assure you and Mr. Cartmell, however, that we are all for bigger and better book coverage, to whatever extent it fits in with our plans for picture reporting of all the news. Meanwhile, we are more than pleased to have readers of your discernment call attention to our bookish nature.

ANDREW HEISKELL.
Publisher, *Life* Magazine
New York, N. Y.

Reflections of an Occupier

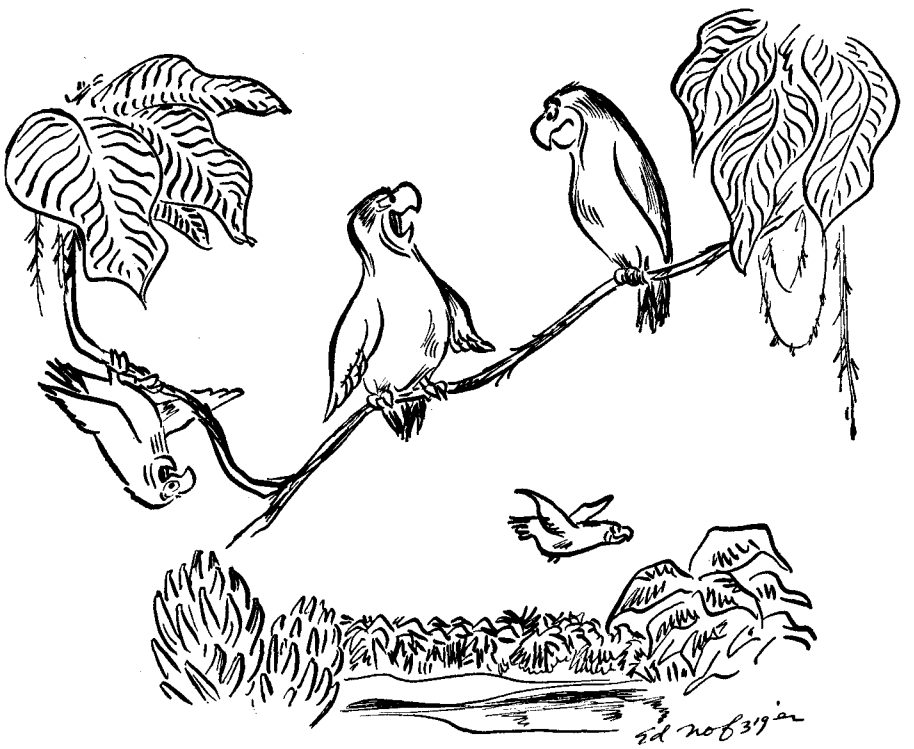
SIR: A copy of *SRL* for April 6, containing Charles J. Rolo's article "Innocents Abroad," has just drifted my way, crying for an answer to what in my belief is an extremely short-sighted bit of reporting.

The observation presented in the article is correct. To a great extent our occupation of Germany is unhappily failing on the moral and political side. There is a tendency on the part of the GI (including both officers and men—we're all in the same boat) to curse the French, British, and Russians, and to pardon the Germans, being impressed by the excellent quality of their plumbing where it exists, as well as by the cooperative nature of their women. In further agreement with the author, this is a situation to be deplored.

It is when Mr. Rolo states, "The root of our failure lies in the fact that the American soldier in Europe has never fully grasped the meaning of this war in relation to *his* country and to *his* home," that I take resounding exception. For, after all, who is the American soldier in Germany today? Is he not, for the most part, the late teen-aged son of the folks back home? Doesn't he, in his own thoughts, reflect the opinions, ideas, and actions of the people back home? And when we say "the American soldier in Europe," can't we say with equal truth "the American citizen in the United States"? Are the "Innocents Abroad" any different, qualitatively, from those equally innocent at home?

To my way of thinking, the root of any mistakes being made in the ideological warfare waged over here today rests deep-seated in the firm soil of reaction which seems to have been uncovered back home. How can we Americans in Europe be at ease with our next-door neighbors the Russians when we are constantly bombarded from the States with speeches of Congressional leaders and others censuring the Communists and predicting war with them in five or ten or twenty years? How can we be impressed with our mission over here when we learn from home that Senator Buttlesnatch of Prairie City thinks the occupation is a failure and should be discontinued immediately? How can we be good ambassadors of democracy when we know that the draft has been cut to the bone, and that soon the size of the occupation force will be but a shadow of its former self?

The chief worries of the great mass of people in our blessed homeland seem to center about the shortage of new cars and refrigerators, along with the rising cost of living. It is a private belief of mine that, aside from those people who actually have children or close relatives on duty in Germany today, the great bulk of American citizens neither know nor care about our mission here. Correct me if I'm wrong. I'd be extremely happy to be shown in error on this point.



"You're among friends, Bub. Cut out the English and squawk like a parrot."

The attitudes and ideas of the individual members of the Occupation Forces cannot be separated from the attitudes and ideas of the homes from which they come. The latter are extremely influential in shaping the former. To accuse us, without simultaneously leveling the finger of guilt at the entire American people, is to do an injustice to the tremendous numbers of GI's who are actually aware of what's going on over here. The "grave danger," Mr. Rolo, is not "that our occupation forces will be seduced by the enemy," but that our entire country will fall into the fallacious belief that the war was a mistake because we fought on the wrong side.

HARVEY J. DWORKEN,
1st Lt., M.C.
Darmstadt, Germany.

Hymns of Hate

SIR: Letter writers I decry
Are those who try to versify.

LOUIS RAMME BURNS.
Rochester, Minn.

SIR: *Guy* and *corny* are well forbid.
Now *lusty* and *salty* deserve the lid.

SARA C. POTTS.
Ormond Beach, Florida.

SIR: Many a mug, fit to announce,
When televised, will get the bounce.
Awful eyeful, far from scenic—
Woe to the untelegenic!

E. T. DARLINGTON.
Philadelphia, Pa.

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Pioneer Days in the Movies

THE GOLDEN EGG. By James Pollak. New York: Henry Holt & Co. 493 pp. $3.

Reviewed by BUDD SCHULBERG

FOR his first novel, "The Golden Egg," James Pollak has reached back into the pioneer days of the motion picture industry, a dynamic and fantastic segment of early twentieth-century history that has long awaited the serious attention of an American novelist. The story opens on Rivington Street, among the poverty-stricken immigrant Jews of New York's lower East Side, in the pre-Hollywood period when it was still considered a disgrace for a stage actor to submit to the vulgar indignities of "the flickers." Respectable businessmen classed the infant industry with carnival shows and flea circuses and scorned such primitive dramas as "The Great Train Robbery" as evidences of a passing fad.

But there were a handful of poor, semi-literate, no-generation Americans, mostly refugees from European pogroms, with enough imagination to sense the tremendous economic potential of the motion picture. In the tradition of our industrial pioneers, these men were aggressive, uneducated, and driven by the voracious materialism that has characterized so many titans of American capitalism.

For his pivotal characters, Pollak has selected two brothers-in-law, the crude, ignorant, shrewd Moe Korn, and the gentler, more old-fashioned family man Louis Levinson (ex-Levinsky), whose son Willie, a successful producer at nineteen, compounds nepotism with mental agility to seize the dynasty while still in his early twenties. Although a preponderant part of this novel is concerned with a Faustian tug-of-war for Willie's soul between the external forces of crude profiteering (as represented by Korn) and of Willie's own intellectually snobbish self-deception, it is the early section dealing with the founding and establishing of a Hollywood dynasty that is most effective. Here the author is on sound ground, for obviously he is drawing on the stranger-than-fiction careers of such cinematic notables as Laemmle, Fox, Goldwyn, and Zukor. Moe and Louis, if not quite three-dimensional, are at least authentic prototypes of these founding fathers. And the sociological alchemy that turned struggling garment workers and street vendors into millionaire dispensers of celluloid culture lends to Mr. Pollak's opening chapters a good deal of the vitality, pace, and color generic to the period.

—*Jules Bricken.*

James Pollak's "'The Golden Egg' presumes to be a historical novel tracing the rise of a great film company."

Since "The Golden Egg" presumes to be a historical novel tracing the rise of a great film company, this reviewer feels justified in questioning a historical omission which would have had dramatic as well as socio-economic significance. The meteoric career of Korn-Levinson is described as a smooth, swift, steady ascent from East Side poverty to Hollywood's super-Olympian heights. Actually if Korn and Levinson were independent producers before World War I, as they appear to be, they would have found themselves along with Laemmle, Fox, Zukor, and others locked in a life-and-death struggle with the Motion Picture Patents Co., a trust of seven companies which formed a tight monopoly by pooling their patents and banning all "outlaw" companies. Between 1908 and 1914, these "outlaws" (who later became the in-laws) engaged in wildcat productions by resorting to such means as hijacking cameras and moving west beyond the range of the Patent Company thugs. This was the main reason for the migration of independents to Hollywood between 1912 and 1916, rather than the vague explanations Pollak advances. By permitting Korn and Levinson to join Laemmle and Fox in their bitter battle with the company, Pollak could have taken advantage of this ready-made drama while at the same time serving the cause of historical accuracy.

Pollak is obviously at home in a film studio, and his description of cutting and projection rooms, movie sets and commissaries and the cutters, script-girls, grips, and assistant directors gives us an accurate picture of the still not well enough known Hollywood proletariat. But the central character is Willie Levinson, who, as "the youngest producer in the world," supposedly inherits the mantle of Thalberg.

But the credulity of the reader does not start earning time-and-a-half until the introduction of Pollak's heroine, Lucy Strawbridge, a New York society girl complete with brains and Culture, who becomes not only Willie's fiancee but an intellectual force for the uplift of film standards within the studio. Lucy, in her valiant effort to improve Willie's mind and his product, goes into action against the heavily accented vested interests who begin to sound more like comic strips escaped from Milt Gross than big studio executives. In reality, the only important Hollywood figure who continues to indulge in the kind of dialect Pollak employs is Sam Goldwyn, and when it comes to improving the Hollywood product, this reviewer would be inclined to back Sam against Lucy for all her college courses.

Today Hollywood has no want of indigenous critics, producers, directors, writers, who have become conscious of their own shortcomings and hold seminars and publish magazines exhorting one another to enrich the content of motion pictures. To reach outside the industry for an upper-class dilettante and delegate to her the important job of analyzing and attempting to correct Hollywood's faults strikes me as a piece of snobbery as presumptuous as it is unconvincing. Society girls have from time to time added Hollywood to their itinerary of world-playgrounds, but most of them have sought to outdo Elsa Maxwell rather than Orson Welles.

Faint Is the Light

By Elizabeth Coatsworth

THE wind is rising,
The moon is setting,
The branches brush
At the window pane.

The Pleiades
Are faint and broken,
The Dipper swings
To pour out rain.

Not a cricket is left
To sing in the grasses,
Not a tree-toad calls
From the leafless trees.

The wind is rising,
The house is shaken,
Faint in the light
Of the Pleiades.

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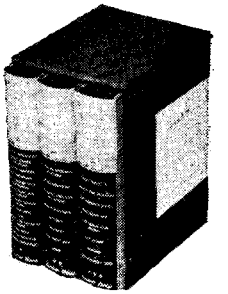

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Seeing Things

THE MIDAS TOUCH

YOU can almost see the two of them, and hear them, as they talk by firelight in the late afternoon over their hyson tea. This is one of the virtues of Elia's tender essay on "Old China."

Charles had, no doubt, closed his books, and climbed off his high stool at the India House, with more than usual alacrity that day when the releasing clock struck four. Doubtless, too, Charles had pushed his way home to Russell Street impatiently through a darkening London.

Why impatiently? Because in his heart he knew that eagerness which collectors find hard to control when they yearn to see a new purchase on display. Unquestionably Mary (the Bridget of the essay), being in good health at the moment, had awaited Lamb's arrival with something of his excitement. On their tea table was spread a set of rare old blue china. It was a recent acquisition which they were to use for the first time. It was this blue china, bought so easily, bought without skimping in these their more prosperous years, which forced them in the midst of their pleasure to think back to more difficult days.

"I wish the good old times would come again," sighed Mary, "when we were not quite so rich. I do not mean that I want to be poor; but there was a middle state"—so she was pleased to ramble on—"in which I am sure we were a great deal happier. A purchase is but a purchase now that you have money enough and to spare. Formerly it used to be a triumph."

The rich man's difficulties in getting into the kingdom of God are not New Deal discoveries. There was that camel and that needle's eye. They remain the most graphic of all the storm warnings against wealth. Since then, moralists have constantly hymned the virtues of poverty to the unlistening. Usually for others, and when secure and comfortable themselves. Men and women sufficiently endowed to rank as patrons are fond of employing this same tiresome moral tone. In their nice homes, and with their money working for them, they find it easy to contend that authors and artists should starve—in garrets.

But Mary Lamb was not talking morality. At least she did not mean to make a moral point. She was merely discussing how the pleasures of buying rare china, of collecting old books, of climbing up the dizzying stairs to the gallery to see a play, or of purchasing the first expensive strawberries of the season, had diminished for her and for her brother since those years when the two of them had had to make sacrifices to indulge themselves in such things.

If I now take money as my theme, I do not do so to discuss it as a moralist or an economist. Although many people despise it in conversation, I trust I am old and realistic enough to prize money for what it is worth—and no more; to see it as a liberating means

"The heroine has one tailormade suit, not a closet hung with more clothes than Bluebeard's was with wives."

rather than an imprisoning end; and to know with Charles Lamb that, from the point of view of an older person's comfort, a "competence is supplementary youth, a sorry supplement indeed, but I fear the best that is to be had."

I promise, when railing against money, neither to attack those who have come by it honorably nor to pretend that I do not wish everyone (including myself) had much, much more of it. I dwell upon the wretched, lovely stuff solely for esthetic reasons; indeed, only as an intermittent moviegoer who has found how costly Hollywood's big budgets can be to his own enjoyment. I am not regretting the sums I have spent on the movies. And certainly not the fact that I had them to spend. Far from it. Instead, I am deploring the fortunes which movie magnates have squandered on us, their hopeful patrons, under the strange, ignorant, and vulgar delusion that a picture is bound to be good to see in exact proportion to the amount that it cost to make.

Recently I happen to have seen Noel Coward's "Brief Encounter."* And this British film, made on a small budget, has compelled me to lament once again, as I have often had cause to lament in the past, the sins which Hollywood commits against itself and us in the name of generosity. Mr. Coward's movie is based upon "Still Life," a playlet by him which many of us first remember seeing in New York on the third and concluding bill on his "Tonight at 8:30." As a long one-act, "Still Life" was a slick, undistinguished job about a British suburban wife who, on her weekly visits to a nearby town, came near to having a disrupting affair with a married doctor.

On the screen Mr. Coward's story remains—merely as a story—as slickly and as superficially stated as it was on the stage. It deals with the stencils rather than the truths of passion. It may be set to Rachmaninoff's Concerto No. 2, but it is keyed to daydreaming, the Dodie Smith of "Call It a Day," and women's glossy magazines. It is properly sad, and sadly proper; something designed to create nostalgia and the illusion of temptation in the ample bosoms of Helen Hokinson's ladies. Its dialogue, considered only as dialogue, is no deeper than it ever was. Its central situation is stretched disquietingly beyond those lengths which made it acceptable as a vaudeville skit. Yet in movie form "Brief Encounter" takes on excellences which, more than being welcome, are almost revolutionary.

Why? Not merely because it has been directed with radiant discrimination by Mr. Lean, and is admirably acted by Celia Johnson, Trevor Howard, and Joyce Carey. Or because it explores all the sounds, sights, passageways, and people of a provincial railway station to brilliant advantage. No, there is more to the effectiveness of "Brief Encounter" than this. What is most exceptional about it is that it dares to allow its average characters to remain average. It does not mistake an emptied cornucopia for either truth or imagination. Because of its willingness to stay within the bounds of normal budgets (hence daily possibilities and experiences),

*BRIEF ENCOUNTER, a screen play by Noel Coward. Directed by David Lean. Produced by Mr. Coward in England. Released in this country by Prestige Pictures, Inc. A J. Arthur Rank production. With Celia Johnson, Trevor Howard, Joyce Carey, etc. At the Little Carnegie Theatre.

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it can claim an honesty—a nearness to life—almost unknown in Hollywood's offerings.

The heroine of "Brief Encounter," though pretty, is not a traveling salesman's idea of Venus. Hers is an interesting face, not a vacant one. It is touched by life rather than retouched by an ever-hovering makeup man. She has obviously been mothered, not mimeographed. Her hair looks as if she could have brushed and combed it herself, and not as if it were her habit to have a permanent after every cigarette. She gets along as nicely without sweaters as she does without mink coats, a swan bed, a custom-built Cadillac, a costly and always unspotted negligee in which to help her butler do the housework, or a kitchenette roomy enough to make the Grand Central Station appear claustrophobic.

She has one tailormade suit, not a closet hung with more street clothes than Bluebeard's was with wives. She wears the same hat more than once; and is compelled to wear it as often and as proudly as most wives must wear their hats. In short, she is a wife not a moll; a woman instead of a magazine cover. What is touching, because true, in her is touching for the same simple, and therefore startling, reasons in the production of Mr. Coward's film as a whole. This fidelity to actual living; this willingness to keep its expenses scaled to life's facts rather than its fantasies is not only what redeems the story-telling of "Brief Encounter" but what distinguishes the entire movie.

Hollywood seems, however, to be either unwilling or unable to learn the lesson that it should have been taught by the better foreign films. It refuses to realize that in the realm of motion pictures, no less than outside of it, comparative poverty can be the mother of invention.

Its executives may applaud "The Baker's Wife," "Open City," or "Sous les Toits de Paris" (to choose at random) as heartily as any of us do. Yet, having applauded such films, they apparently forget that they have ever seen them. For the most part they continue to go their old Lobster Supper Charlie way, delighting in the pitiful ostentations of the *nouveaux-riches*. They spend millions every year documenting their fibs; functioning as dream-peddlers, as dealers in so much visual marijuana. They can never leave well enough off alone.

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Years ago Alexander Woollcott was toastmaster at a dinner given for the Theatre Guild. The dinner's purpose was to raise the funds with which to buy two Gobelin tapestries for the interior of the playhouse the Guild had just built and was about to open. Mr. Woollcott could no more resist a pun than could the Charles Lamb whose set of blue china started us off on this discussion of the esthetic virtues of poverty. He turned to the Guild's directors and issued this warning, "The Gobelins will get you, if you don't watch out."

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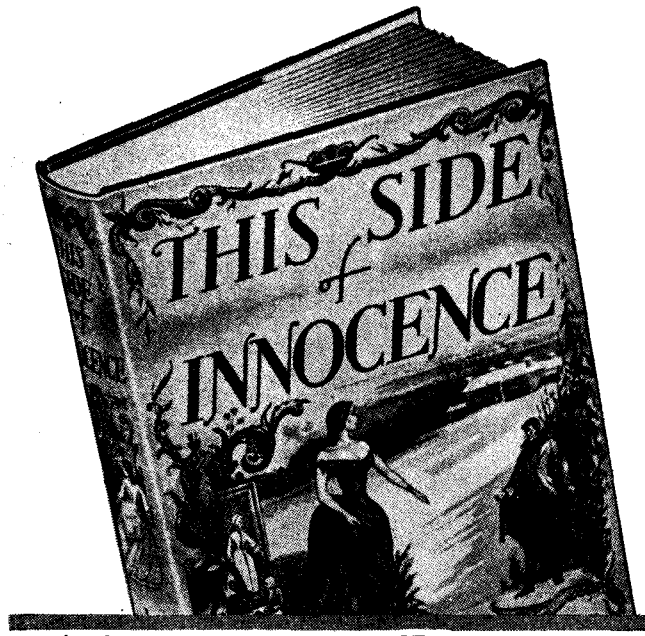

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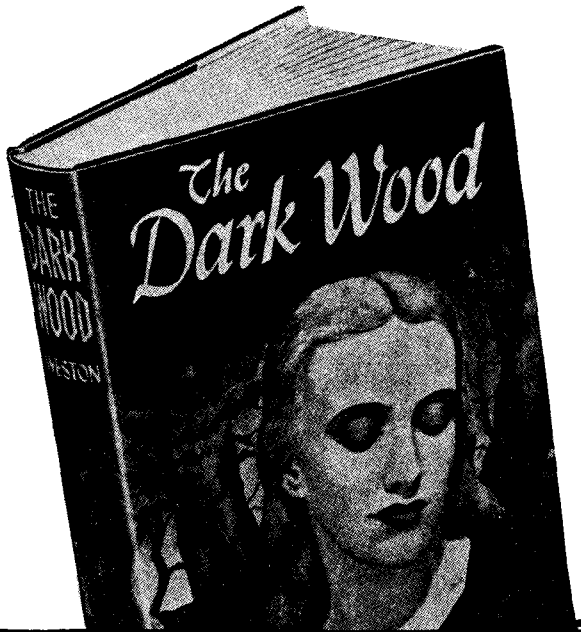

AT ALL BOOKSTORES CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS AT ALL BOOKSTORES

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Love Is Where You Find It

LETTY FOX: HER LUCK. By Christina Stead. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co. 1946. 517 *pp.* $3.50.

Reviewed by HARRISON SMITH

WE HAVE had to wait until today for a novel sufficiently comprehensive in outline, background, and knowledge to reveal in the cold light of reason the disintegration of family life in American cities over the last twenty years and the debauchery of young girls that has resulted from this phenomenon. The author of "Letty Fox: Her Luck," a book of some three hundred thousand words, is Christina Stead, an Australian-born novelist who has lived in this country for only nine or ten years. Many American women, in novels and short stories, have described the girl who is the product of broken homes and dissolute and unhappy parents, but no one has cared to or has been able to document thoroughly enough the story of the girl who, though she is accepted by society, becomes an accomplished courtesan by the time she is twenty. It needed the broad canvas that Miss Stead has provided, the scores of related characters and the scenes that shift from a New York apartment, to a broken-down estate in New Jersey, a boarding-house hotel in Connecticut, and flats and hotels in London and Paris. The author has used American backgrounds in several of her previous novels, but it is still something of a miracle that anyone who was not born in this country should be able to capture so accurately the American scene and the nuances of American speech. Yet there is not a chapter in the book which would fit into the pages of a popular magazine nor could Letty herself or any of her friends be truthfully presented on the screen. It resembles in an odd way Defoe's incomparable novel "The Fortunes and Misfortunes of Moll Flanders," though Letty, for all her lovers, is not a bawd. It has the same objectivity, ruthlessness, and lack of any sentimentality. These were the facts, Miss Stead seems to say; this is the way thousands of girls live and speak and love today, and these are the reasons for it. Certainly it has the power to shock, for Letty, as she tells her passionate story and the long history of her childhood and of her family, is honest and unsparing of the truth.

This is a woman's novel, and almost entirely peopled with women, young and old. The men have substance enough to be real, but they are like bothersome ghosts, with the exception of Letty's father who, though he has caused the central trouble by leaving his family and living with his enigmatic young mistress, is the rock on which a reckless and mad family leans. When he goes to London with his girl, most of the family follow him, Grandmother Fox, Grandmother Morgan, a ruthlessly frank old dame who has money of her own; the little girls, Letty and her sister, and their weeping mother; Aunt Phyllis who gives herself to any man if there is the remotest chance that he might marry her; Uncle Philip who cannot help seducing every girl he meets.

When Letty returned to New York, she was almost adolescent; she was sent to fairly good schools when Father had the money. She learned to apply herself, to discover talents that were of no use to her. By the time she had grown up she was ready for lovers, though for sheer perversity she kept from them for a time. She had given up her childish dreams of wanting to torture men with her beauty, to spurn them, step on their faces, make them cut their throats for her. She knew the girls and men and women around her to be dissolute and material.

She wanted a career; but though she succeeded at whatever job she took, her heart was not in it. She was divided between wanting to be brilliant, successful, to enter radical and esthetic movements and wanting to marry. She was essentially restless but she knew that only marriage and a child could satisfy her. She lost whatever illusions she had held. The men who slept with her were of no use to her, for she sponged on her father rather than on her lovers. They were experiments, part of her search for solidity and security. They dropped cigarette ashes beside the bed and it dissatisfied her to clean up after them in the morning.

—*Portrait by Lydia Gibson.*

". . . this or the next novel of Christina Stead's may start a fracas it will be a pleasure to witness."

But most of the book is not about this one girl. She has always before her eyes the depressing spectacle of the degeneration of the older women of her family. Her once beautiful mother had to resign herself to abandonment and to a manless life. One of her grandmothers crept into a mean and filthy flat to spend her last days complaining of the food she ate and of the heartlessness of her relatives, trying to keep gaunt, poverty-stricken old women from taking possession of one of her two rooms.

It is not unlikely that this or the next novel of Miss Stead's may start a fracas amongst American critics that it will be a pleasure to witness. Not long ago the usually astute Clifton Fadiman labeled her "the most extraordinary woman novelist produced by the English-speaking race since Virginia Woolf," as if in his enthusiasm he was comparing a club with a rapier. Others have written that "she combines compassion with pitiless clarity" and is "a master of English prose." Some of these encomiums were the result of her previous novel, called, since she has the most unfortunate taste in titles, "For Love Alone," a novel that in our opinion does not deserve to sit on the same shelf with "Letty Fox: Her Luck." Certainly a more misleading title for a major work would be hard to find. A few reviewers will doubtless hint that she is writing fiction for the titilation of housemaids, forgetting that they are a vanished race; others will ask, with lifted eyebrows, "Who are these people? I have never met anyone like them in my life." But you can be sure that they are amongst us by the tens of thousands, the Letty Foxes. Perhaps there will be a few of them in the nearest bar or nightclub when you turn out your light at midnight; just as their aunts and their grandmothers, exiled from life by the increasing ruin of family ties, may lie not far away, with loneliness as their bedfellow, or perhaps with the smell of poverty in their old noses. It is not a pleasant thought that almost universal divorce and the cramped life of small apartments in all our cities have brought this bitter unhappiness to so many, this ruthless struggle of emancipated young women for security. Christiana Stead is only one of a long line of writers who have not been accepted by comfortable people because she has touched too closely and too sharply the nerve centers where our conscience lies.

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CHARLES JACKSON
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in his new novel

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AS in THE LOST WEEKEND the impact of this story will seriously affect the lives of many readers, and women and men everywhere will recognize its truth.

John Grandin and his wife, Ethel, still loved each other — but neither could have said with certainty when they stopped being lovers. Grandin's increasing separateness — his academic success — his pre-occupation with his work — were signs and warnings, imperfectly read. All they knew was that there was something hopelessly, bafflingly wrong . . .

Like many men during the war, John Grandin was obsessed with a sense of guilt that he was too old to fight, that the young men in his classes today would face death tomorrow. There was, too, the realization that his love for his wife had become a mere sense of duty. Into this private world of Grandin's confusion and unhappiness came a young marine captain . . . and all the vague forebodings that were hidden in the far corners of his mind suddenly flamed into reality . . .

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A Distinguished First Novel

THE CRATER'S EDGE. By Stephen Bagnall. New York: William Morrow & Co. 1946. 154 *pp.* $2.

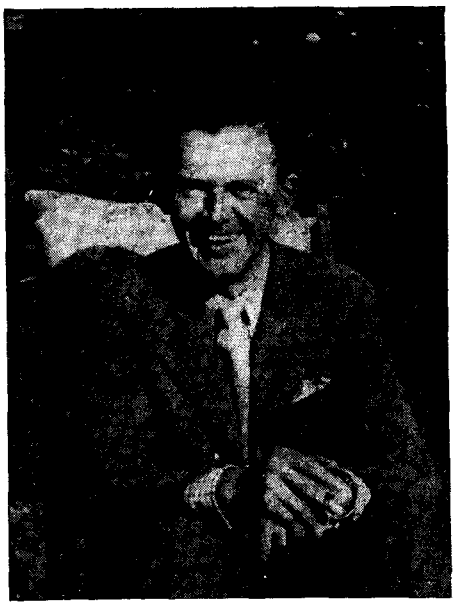
Reviewed by BEN RAY REDMAN

THIS distinguished first novel, if novel it is, has few close relations among the many books that have come out of the war. The closest that I can call to mind is Robert Henriques's "The Voice of the Trumpet," but even between these two are distance and difference. However, they are alike in that each concerns itself with the mental and spiritual aspects of war, rather than with the military aspects, and they are alike, too, in that they are the work of poets, neither of whom is afraid of lyric prose; each of whom, indeed, glories in the cadences and beauties possible to the English tongue. In a day when so many half-completed thoughts find expression in half-completed prose, writing of the kind practised by Colonel Henriques and Mr. Bagnall almost seems to belong to another age. We could do with more of it.

"The Crater's Edge" may be called a novel for the sake of convenience. More precisely, it is the monologue of a mind seeking to know itself and the body it inhabits and the spirit by which it believes itself to be companioned. It is the interior monologue of a dying man who is trying to lay hold upon some vital pattern of meaning, some faith, that will not vanish under his searching touch. It is the interior monologue of a man who is trying to find answers to the most fundamental of all questions. It is the story of a man who has fled God down the arches of the years, turning at last to face God in utter humility.

Simon Dean regains consciousness in a bomb-crater or shell-hole, he cannot be sure which, with no knowledge of how he came there. The last thing he can remember is his unit's marching forward to an attack. Now he is propped against the crater's side, in no pain as yet, but powerless to move his legs. Immobilized, alone, and lost in time, with the practical certainty that no earthly future lies ahead, he begins to explore his past, tentatively at the start, then with increasing determination and a growing sense of purpose.

It is music of which he thinks first, for, as he realizes towards the end, music has always been for him "the food of life." Music leads him to Elizabeth, and their first miraculous encounter; but from this remembered glimpse of Elizabeth he returns quickly to his present situation and the imminence of death. Thereafter, with occasional lapses into unconsciousness, he shuttles back and forth between present and past, sinking himself ever more deeply in the latter, trying in all simplicity to discover what his life has meant, if it has had any meaning at all. The attempt is not made along chronological lines, the recovery and analysis of things past seem at first to be almost haphazard; but, fragment by fragment, the picture completes itself.



Stephen Bagnall "is a writer to read now, and to watch for from now on."

We know what he thinks of war in general and of Hitler in particular, and of England and organized religion and many other things. We know that he wished to be an actor, but lacked the courage; that he has worked in an office and is the author of many unpublished poems, several unpublished plays, and hundreds of articles, seven of which have seen print. We know that his life has been a search for true companionship to abate the essential loneliness of living, and that human love has failed him. No one has loved more fully, with more complete abandon, with more wonder at the miracle of love; and no one has been cast down more harshly from the heights on which romantic love breathes and has its being. His pure friendship with Pierre, the French boy in whose home he spent six months for the sake of language, remains the one unspoiled association of his life; but friendship is not enough. His relationship with Kate, too, was only friendship, although it might have been more, and so it was insufficient. When he met Celia, he knew he had found what he was seeking, all that he was seeking, and a few months later, after ecstasy and agony and disillusionment, he knew how terribly wrong he had been. Then Elizabeth came, or rather she returned into his life, and once again he was sure. Now, in the crater, the remembrance of Elizabeth was the cruelest of all.

Stephen Bagnall has said his say with skill and power and beauty. Having compared "The Crater's Edge" with "The Voice of the Trumpet," I must add that there are a few false notes in the eloquence of the former book, whereas, to my ear at least, there is none in the eloquence of Colonel Henriques. But Mr. Bagnall is already a master of the kind of language he has chosen to use, and we as readers may hope to profit by that mastery in the future. In any event, his first book is a notable and self-sufficient achievement. One need not walk in step with Simon Dean to believe in the reality of his spiritual journey and in its timely significance.

Finally, let me add that it would be possible for a critic to poke around in the evidence and come up with a case against Simon which would argue that when he turned to women for happiness he was turning against his own nature, and was therefore doomed to frustration and disappointment. But as regards this I prefer not to poke, for whether or not such a case could be made out successfully is really beside the point. However Simon may be analyzed, there is no doubt as to the quality of his creator. He is a writer to read now, and to watch for from now on.

How Loud the Hush

By Joseph Hirsh

WHAT constant tides are these,
Whose waves crash round our heads,
Surround, submerge and drown
In swirls of ceaseless sound?
What times are these
Which leave us bleached like jetsam,
A sucked out shell on shore,
Insensate to the largest decibel?
What place is this
That only when the tides turn to the sea,
And eddies form their pools,
Silence articulate with thought?
What men are we
Who awe before the echoes of the vacancy,
Who find the hush so loud, so lonely
We are lost.

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By Christopher La Farge

AUTHOR OF

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Non-Fatal Siren

CHLOE MARR. By A. A. Milne. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc. 1946. 314 pp. $2.75.

Reviewed by R. L. North

IT OUGHT to be possible to express dissatisfaction with Mr. Milne's "Chloe Marr" without being unpleasant, but I am not hopeful about it. To begin: I am reminded of the time I used to go to the public library to examine bound volumes of *Puck*, among other things. There were the deft line-drawings, and the spirited sallies between Gerald and Geraldine (or the Vicar and the Charwoman), that left me positively frozen. I have experienced that same unhappiness here—three hundred pages liberally sprinkled with Gay Banter, darling, darling, ducky, and hallo, until I wanted to scream, "When are they going to *say* something!"

But it runs deeper than that. Chloe is a character whom Mr. Milne feels to be somehow significant, and exhibits at great length through the eyes of her many worshippers. She is beautiful and gay. She lives quite ambiguously upon mysterious resources and in a mysterious way, distributing kisses and, it would seem, withholding all else. She dines and dances and flirts with Claude and Barnaby and Everard and all the others. She poises upon the edge of their lives and will not enter. She smiles upon them and turns away, to hide what glittering tear we may never see. She is the Pagliacca of Mayfair and London. All about her they yearn and gaze in wild surmise, but never know. And neither do we.

We can, however, make our guess upon all the evidence that is in. Chloe is a cloying and sentimental empty-head. She is about as credible and as fatal a siren as Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm. The spectacle of men falling at her feet all about her, as, let us say, about Zola's Nana, would suggest some unfortunate generalizations about comparative national temperament, except that Chloe's history is not actually a serious or realistic work. It is written as though by the adoring Claude or the worshipful Everard, and proves to be as tiresome.

Your Literary I.Q.

By Howard Collins

QUOTATIONS ABOUT SWORDS

Frances Darling, of Marshfield Hills, Massachusetts, offers a galaxy of quotations about swords. Can you name the author of each and the poem from which it was taken? Allowing five points for each correct answer, a score of 60 is par, 70 is very good, and 80 or better is excellent. (A perfect score is 120.) Answers are on page 53.

1. But this time all the blade, like glass,
   Sprang in a thousand shivers on the helm,
   And in the hand the hilt remained alone.
2. For the sword outwears its sheath
   And the soul wears out the breast.
3. One, two! One, two! And through and through
   The vorpal blade went snicker-snack!
4. He hath loosed the fateful lightning of His terrible swift sword.
5. Beneath the rule of men entirely great
   The pen is mightier than the sword.
6. So he spake, and, speaking, sheathed
   The good sword by his side,
   And, with his harness on his back,
   Plunged headlong in the tide.
7. Back he spurred like a madman, shrieking a curse to the sky,
   With the white road smoking behind him and his rapier brandished high.
8. And, save his good broadsword, he weapons had none—
   He rode all unarmed, and he rode all alone.
9. Then came the king's son, wounded, sore bestead,
   And weaponless, and saw the broken sword,
   Hilt-buried in the dry and trodden sand.
10. My good blade carves the casques of men.
11. Flashed all their sabres bare,
    Flashed as they turned in air.
12. All the haft twinkled with diamond sparks,
    Myriads of topaz-lights, and jacinth work
    Of subtlest jewellery.

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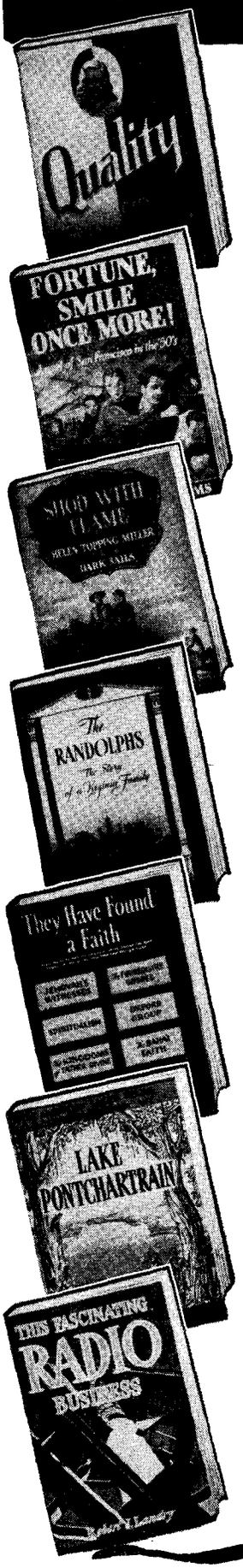

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A Meritorious Prize Winner

NORTH & SOUTH. By Elizabeth Bishop. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 54 pp. $2.

Reviewed by LLOYD FRANKENBERG

FOR once a prize committee has chosen well. The publication of Elizabeth Bishop's "North & South," latest in the series of Houghton Mifflin Poetry Fellowships, is a distinct literary event.

"The Map" introduces us to her strongly delineated, subtly colored world. Following it south, from "The Imaginary Iceberg" to "the state with the prettiest name" ("Florida"), we are exploring a style supple, versatile and idiomatic, brilliant without being shallow, profound without trying.

"The Gentleman of Shalott" exemplifies man's duality by his physical symmetry ("this arrangement / of leg and leg and / arm and so on"). Unlike Tennyson's heroine, he doesn't have to look in a glass. His shape is his mirror. Which side is which? Where does introspection leave off and solid animal begin? Resigned to imperfection,

> . . . The uncertainty
> he says he
> finds exhilarating. He loves
> that sense of constant re-adjustment.
> He wishes to be quoted as saying
> at present:
> "Half is enough."

Elizabeth Bishop has an unfailing ear, both metrically and in its precise translation of the visual. "Quai d'Orleans" begins:

> Each barge on the river easily tows
> a mighty wake,
> a giant oak-leaf of gray lights
> on duller gray;
> and behind it real leaves are floating by,
> down to the sea.
> Mercury-veins on the giant leaves,
> the ripples, make
> for the sides of the quai, to extinguish themselves
> against the walls
> as softly as falling-stars come to their ends
> at a point in the sky.

The interplay of rhyme and assonance, the resurgent imagery, the alternating lines, with washing rhythms breaking, lengthening like the currents of water, create modulations various and repetitive as the original scene. Later we find this no mere sensational reproduction:

> "If what we see could forget us half as easily,"
> I want to tell you,
> "as it does itself—but for life we'll not be rid
> of the leaves' fossils."

The conclusion shows us that acute observation has led beyond itself. The stream of sensation, the streaming rhythm, have evoked a third correspondence: memory. Disappearing while we watch them, events produce it as if we were remembered by them.

These illustrations neglect the magnificent incantatory "Roosters"; the meanings — rhetorical, astronomical, liturgical—of "Anaphora"; the mystery of dreams—their sense of leading to something withheld—in "Sleeping Standing Up"; in fact the unique quality of all these poems. Without striving for novelty Elizabeth Bishop's poems make their appeal to the senses, the mind, the heart, and what goes beyond classification since it is, as in all original poetry, the reflection of a "light that never was, on sea or land":

> He does not see the moon; he observes only her vast properties,
> feeling the queer light on his hands,
> neither warm nor cold,
> of a temperature impossible to record in thermometers.

Elizabeth Bishop "introduces us to her strongly delineated, subtly colored world."

A British Soldier Poet

CRUSADE. By Captain John Waller. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1946. 51 pp. $2.

Reviewed by MARTHA BACON

AS the young poets of World War II stand forth to be heard, one is tempted to make comparisons between the writers of the two conflicts, useless and vain as the conclusions drawn from such comparisons may be. For the voices of the two embattled generations differ as greatly as the wars themselves, and Captain Waller, an Englishman who served with the British Army in the Middle East throughout this war, is typical of this difference. He is a man of his own time, and his book of poems expresses pretty clearly at least one recognizable trend of the moment.

The last generation of war poets, along with all their other troubles, had the additional pain of suffering a ghastly surprise. Few people had believed that war could be fought upon such a monstrous scale, or that humanity could sink to such depths as 1914-18 proved possible. The years 1939-45 brought us the cruelties of the Nazis and the victory of atoms, and now we can believe anything. The anger and bitterness which followed World War I were partly attributable to astonishment as well as to disillusionment and disgust. The poetry of World War II largely lacks the sense of outrage that we discover in earlier volumes. Somehow our tragedy was foreseen in this decade and no human terms have been found sufficient to express anger in the face of the recent horror. And so in Captain Waller's book we find pity for our time, a quiet grieving for our general and particular losses, and no disposition to blame anybody save universal evil. In the title poem, "Crusade," he indicates the emotional climate of his book:

> We are more concerned in mourning the past
> Than in probing it, ... and
> Who by cleverness will win their own way. .
> The selfish who will do all they can
> To be comfortable, the business drones, the good
> Who will always be so strangely out of place
> And act so wrongly, the wise leaders
> Ever so tragically few, ...
> . . . . . .
> And the crazy or incompetent fools.
> How to keep clear of fools
> Is our problem.

It is obvious that Captain Waller cares for poetry and can write it and this makes him a blessing to any age, atomic, reasonable, or epic. He has an especial and luminous mood, and his best lines fuse into the tenderness and light that he wishes to convey. He seems to be ignoring schools of versification in favor of writing poetry, and though he has probably come under various influences at various times, he is certainly writing his own poems, not other people's.

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—*Book-of-the-Month Club News*

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Illustrated by FRITZ EICHENBERG

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Old Man of the Tribe

JOSHUA BEENE AND GOD. By Jewel Gibson. New York: Random House. 1946. 238 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by PHIL STONG

ONE judges that this is a transcript of Isaiah and Ezekiel, with some paprika from the minor prophets, as applied to a mildly fanatic cotton farmer in modern Texas. Jeremiah has been done once or twice in various aspects and times. This is a really masterly job of transplanting the damnations of the prophets of older Palestine to present Texas. The hopeless spiritual state of the cotton growers in the sight of the Lord is expounded by a prosperous farmer who considers that he is the greatest prophet ever raised up by Jehovah, and he is not so sure that Jehovah accomplished this job by himself.

Like Job, he expostulates with God, during their occasional conversations, but unlike Job, though he is convinced of ultimate glory, he does not bow his head to the insane determinations of Providence. He is convinced that he can repair the matters that God has overlooked if he can have the least bit of cooperation.

Josh has a slight conversation with God in the first chapter, but there is nothing fantastic about this—it is obvious that God is the back of Josh's mind. However, convinced that he is a prophet, he manages to prophesy the course of love affairs, deaths, and the generally damned (not profane) courses of Spring Creek folks with an accuracy that seems miraculous to the Baptists, Holy Rollers, and Campbellites who occupy the place, and condemn each other.

Josh runs local affairs with all the authority of considerable prophecy and considerable property, through divers incidents governed by his interpretations of Scriptural text and the fact that he remembers every scandal about every inhabitant in the neighborhood—a blackmailing prophet, but moved with no more felonious motive than to save souls from the Baptists by inducting them to the Campbellite opposition.

The facts which make him a blackmailer are also the material that make him the greatest prophet. God reveals things to him, and he does not realize the curse he puts on Leonard Johnson rests on prior knowledge and the observance of the ordinary terms of paresis. All of his prophetic announcements, curses, and blessings rest on about the same frame. Since he is a kind of Old Man of the Tribe, with more memories than anyone in the village, his sayings works out accurately and his insubordinate village is awed to his last moment, when he dons a purple robe and goes away to meet God—the occasion being that he is three-score and ten and has a Scriptural rendezvous.

Life insurance companies may raise some objections, but it is a good story, and gives insight into the methods of prophets and the reasons why they have always been such nuisances. Radio and newspaper commentators please note.

Black and Tan Days

WE ARE BESIEGED. By Barbara Fitzgerald. New York: Putnam's. 1946. 298 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by R. ELLIS ROBERTS

CAROLINE ADAIR was nine years old, staying with Archie and Moira Butler, her uncle and aunt, in the lovely Irish country at the time when Lloyd George's Black and Tans were busy in Ireland. The Sinn Feiners came one night and burnt the fine Butler house, first rousing the owners and urging them to take all of value they could get out in ten minutes; and ten minutes in Irish was, and I hope still is, as indefinite a period of time as one would want. In the French Revolution, in the Russian Revolution a great house, if it was destroyed, was destroyed by the serfs or tenants of the estate; in Ireland it was commonly outsiders who had to come to do the work—at least for a popular and honest landlord like Archie Butler. And these outsiders had little bitterness towards any particular person. They were lighting a path of burning torches for the English soldiers to see their way to the coast and go on over. And at last they took the path and went away.

"We are Beseiged" is a story of the strain in families, among friends, between lovers exacted by that struggle for Irish freedom. Although the great leaders of Irish Nationalism, except Daniel O'Connell, have been Anglo-Irish and often Protestant, the anti-Home Rulers in the families of the ascendency were never, for that fact, more lenient to "the rebels." Caroline's mother, Helen Adair, is completely intransigent, "unreconstructed"; I have met her equal in fanaticism among the Irish Republicans but never, I'm glad to say, among Unionists. She is crazy in her loyalty to a lost cause, insolent in her contempt for Roman Catholics, and pathetically silly in her insistence that *her* country doesn't belong at all to the Nationalists.

Guy Adair, Caroline's father, is a Unionist, too, but neither fanatic nor blind to the obvious fact that the old order is over. They have only two children, Isabel and Caroline. Isabel is lively, flirtatious, and a liar, Caroline is serious, steadfast, and inquiring; both are lovely. This family lives in Dublin, where the older Unionists met Nationalists, even Republicans in guarded intimacy, and even the religious difference is not so distinct as in some places. Isabel meets and falls desperately in love with Dennis Joyce, an ardent Sinn Feiner, of a Sinn Fein and Roman Catholic family, a family socially inferior to the Adairs. Both girls go to school in England; and Miss Fitzgerald is at her most entertaining in her account of the English school. If it is slightly caricatured, it's only fair an Irish author should be getting back at the English version of comic Irish.

Isabel, and Caroline to a less extent, suffer from their mother's hatred of Irish Nationalism; and the tragedy in Isabel's life is, perhaps, a little overcharged, though it gives Miss Fitzgerald one of her best scenes when Hugh Adair calls on Mrs. Joyce. Caroline, a more integrated and less greedy girl, finds her happiness, and the book ends well with her return to the rebuilt Butler house, which her fiance will eventually inherit.

"We Are Besieged" is a first novel, and has much of the weakness of a first novel; but there is real promise in the book. The story is well-sustained, the characterization, if rather typical, is simple and sound; and the descriptive passages will make anyone who knows Ireland anxious to take the first boat there to see if the soft, green, wet land is as beautiful as memory insists.

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Woman's Place

NO WOMAN'S WORLD. By Iris Carpenter. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1946. 338 pp. $3.

Reviewed by JOHN BARKHAM

IRIS CARPENTER, a comely British-born newspaperwoman, dearly wanted to cover the Normandy invasion. But the British War Office, by whom she had been accredited, was stuffy about it. It shared the dim Montgomery view that women in the field were bad luck and bad business. And besides, there was what the British delicately called "the cloakroom question" and the Americans, less finicky, "the latrine business." Because the United States War Department had a more enlightened outlook about skirted correspondents, she applied (and received) American accreditation with all the front-line privileges that that entailed. Hence when the assault waves hit the beaches in June 1944, Miss Carpenter was right up there among the quick and the dead. From then on it was one long and exciting race behind irresistible armies across Europe. This book is Miss Carpenter's record of that experience.

In the winning of victory there was misery as well as glamor, death as well as delight. Many a time and oft her blonde curls were flattened by rain and her smart uniform spattered by mud. Her facile, fast-moving chronicle has a little of everything in it.

There was the bloody landing itself ("bodies split and splashed and strewn"). But the beachheads held and the advance began. Then followed the speedy parade—the hair-cropping ("she held her head high and her scratched, bruised face was set in an expression of disdainful scorn"); the meetings with the Maquis ("those stories will live so long as there is appreciation of the ultimate in valor and sacrifice"); the liberation of Paris ("Unbelievable!").

But Miss Carpenter's place was up with the armies, and she had a ringside seat at the tremendous operations on both sides of the Rhine. The German break-through and the Battle of the Bulge halted her long enough in her onward career to write the best section of the book. Intelligence officers in General Hodge's First Army and at General Montgomery's British Headquarters knew that a counterattack was coming, but were wrong about the time and place. Before the Germans were turned back that bloody Christmas they had come "closer to creating a complete catastrophe for our forces than any Allied

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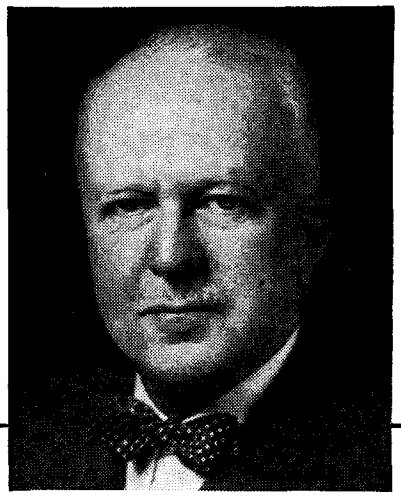

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From statement by Walter S. Gifford, President, American Telephone and Telegraph Company, at 1946 Annual Meeting of stockholders

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commander would ever care to admit."

The Allied tide rolled on again, with Miss Carpenter up front as usual. Occasionally she took a backward glance at the relations between the top commanders, but we are denied revelations of the Ingersoll variety. Just a titillating hint here and there: "Once established on the east bank, both Bradley and Monty were for the first time completely happy." The toppling of the German cities, the horror of the concentration camps, the arrival at the Elbe—it all glides quickly, slickly by. For Miss Carpenter, though she may not have known it at the time, had a double rendezvous: with history, and with the First Army's red-headed operations officer, whom she promised to marry at the end of the book.

If her neatly-tailored tale sets no hearts a-pounding, that is scarcely Miss Carpenter's fault. Too many others have trod the same road before her. And through a woman's eyes, as through a man's, the picture is the same: war is hell.

A Two-Way Novel

THE IDOLS OF THE CAVE. By Frederic Prokosch. New York: Doubleday & Co. 1946. 373 pp. $2.75.

Reviewed by NATHAN L. ROTHMAN

THE soul of man is, as Mr. Prokosch is fond of pointing out, a dichotomous thing, yearning in one direction and moving quite helplessly in another. So also is this book, which raises so many rich and somber expectations only to neglect them for the accomplishment of a thin bauble of a story. Mr. Prokosch's avowed purposes are magnificent: to orchestrate the nature of man under his terrible contemporary pressures; to prevent the dissolution of those who would look the other way and the fierce tempering of those who would stand and resist; to use, more specifically, the pretentious and frothy crust of New York society in the way that Proust used the French, for analysis and diagnosis. We are aware of these purposes. They are announced, they are prepared, the note is struck and struck again, with portentous rumblings and off-stage flashes. But the awaited development never comes, the revelatory words are not uttered—for all the time the stage is crowded with the business of a third-rate romance.

Jonathan Ely is the man of the book. He is an architect who had thrown in his lot with the betrayed Spanish government, who has returned to America to find it wilfully blind to the meaning of world forces up to the crucial moment in December of 1941, and who remains to probe the continuing shallowness of American social philosophy up to the year of victory. This is a description of Jonathan's thoughts, at such times as he stands aside to contemplate them. But his effective life is quite another thing. In the earliest pages of his history he becomes entangled with Lydia Ivanovna, who is by all the internal evidence a ballerina with the Ballet Theater, and most of these pages are devoted to his pursuit of her, or hers of him, his conjectures (and those of the other men about her) upon the meaning of her mysterious soul, his apostrophes to the miseries and emptiness of love.

All of this is bad enough for Jonathan; it is even worse for the book. For his calfish affair with Lydia has no meaning whatsoever, except possibly that a man may brood upon the meanings of the world's disasters and spend his own waking hours in folly. Jonathan seems disqualified as a witness.

Even his observation of the one world he seeks to inhabit, that of the ballet, is limited and faulty. He describes it, in alternate moods, as either enchanting or meretricious, with no apparent perception of the devoted labor and the creative genius that are brought to it. He speaks no significant lines, and his occasional soliloquies upon the emptiness of his friends' existence are far from the prophetic fire we had expected. He does not seem to be the man, nor does this seem to be the book, that the writer had planned.

Frederic Prokosch "raises many rich and somber expectations only to neglect them for . . . a thin bauble of a story."

With Clay Hands

THE BIG CLOCK. By Kenneth Fearing. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1946. 175 pp. $2.50.

Reviewed by HOWARD HAYCRAFT

EVER since Kenneth Fearing's intellectual thriller "The Dagger of the Mind," some five years ago, discriminating fanciers of the murder novel have been hoping for a return engagement. "The Big Clock" is both a reward for patience and a disappointment.

When Pauline Delos, mistress of magazine titan Earl Janoth, is murdered, George Stroud, editor of Janoth's *Crimeways*, is detailed to organize the hunt for an unidentified witness spotted near the scene of the crime. Stroud realizes that the unknown, if found, is scheduled either to be liquidated or framed for the murder. What only he and the reader know is that Stroud has been enjoying an ill-advised interlude with the murdered woman and is himself the doomed witness. His hands effectively tied and lips sealed, his life and happiness at stake, Stroud's only hope is to control the search; but soon little, forgotten circumstances begin to weave an inexorable web around him. Telling the story in rapidly shifting sequences through the minds of the several participants, Mr. Fearing uses all his wit and undeniable literary skill to create a mood of mounting tension and excitement seldom surpassed in this type of writing.

Then, with the climax, comes the jolt. It is difficult to make clear the nature of Mr. Fearing's failure without betraying the reviewer's code—even though the novel is not a "mystery" in the conventional sense. First, he resolves the immediate predicament by a dubious *deus ex machina* device. This is structurally weak, but not fatal. What is much more serious, he rests his ultimate conclusion on an assumption so amazingly disregardful of the stated facts that credibility is all but destroyed and enough plot ends are left to choke a reasonably conscientious pulp editor.

It would seem axiomatic that an author who essays the novel of plot undertakes the obligation to make factual sense to his readers if nothing else. This Mr. Fearing has failed to do in his headlong dénouement, and an otherwise brilliant and exciting tale suffers in consequence.

The pseudo-philosophical passages about Life which give the novel its title would not be missed by one reader. Apart from these, Mr. Fearing's prose is lean, vernacular, and effective.

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Deeping No. 62

THE IMPUDENCE OF YOUTH. By Warwick Deeping. New York: The Dial Press. 1946. 284 *pp.* $2.

Reviewed by GRACE FRANK

WARWICK DEEPING can be counted upon—sometimes as often as three times a year—to give his readers a nice story about interesting people topped off with proper sentiments and a happy ending, and this, his sixty-second volume, conforms to type. Indeed he here returns to the milieu of some of his more successful stories ("Sorrel and Son," "Roper's Row," "The Dark House," "No Hero—This") and describes the vagaries of the medical world, a world well known to him from personal experience.

J. J. Pope, odd in appearance, quixotic in character, but with the self-assurance of genius, early discovered that his great head, tiny legs and low social station would gain him no popularity with his fellow men and that even his remarkable brain and quick tongue might hinder rather than help him. Moreover, after much difficulty in qualifying as a physician and setting up for himself, he was obliged to recognize the fact that he was a failure not only because of his lack of a gracious presence but because of his tendency to treat his patients as guinea-pigs rather than as human beings. However, Kitty Jewell, the lovely little wife he married, and Peter Pratten, a wealthy friend of his Cambridge days, never lost faith in J. J. When the baffled genius was loneliest they bolstered his self-esteem. They also accomplished the happy ending for this success story, Kitty by helping in the regeneration of J. J.'s soul and Peter by putting him in the way of securing a large fortune, a Rolls Royce, and the power to triumph over his stupid and discomfitted adversaries.

Mr. Deeping's flings at Enlightened Labor, the Official Slave World, and the Loud Levellers (the capitals are his) will probably delight contemporary Tories, and the medical profession will recognize certain conditions which, although the tale is laid in the days when Maurice Hewlett was a fashionable author, have not essentially changed. Mr. Deeping pours his fiction in well-worn grooves with a hand made deft by long practice, and this Elsie book for grown-ups will doubtless satisfy the regular patrons of his factory. Others, however, will find the novel old-fashioned in matter and technique, its characters and situations shop-worn and too obviously contrived.

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She Married a German

ON SOME FAIR MORNING. By Catherine Hutter. New York: Dodd, Mead & Co. 1946. 403 pp. $3.

Reviewed by NANCY G. CHAIKIN

MISS HUTTER writes the story of Elsa Crewe, remarkable daughter of a wealthy American shipbuilder whose widower-father takes her, finally, to Germany and a life torn constantly among loves and politics. More than that, Miss Hutter writes the amazing history of Germany, of Europe itself—a history which starts in the late 1800's and follows a convulsive and still significant course through the terrifying prelude to our Second World War.

We are dealing here with material which is, unfortunately, still timely, with abstractions as well as developments which even now cast great shadows over conference tables and assert themselves in depressing news flashes. We are dealing with ideologies which, even as they did in the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth, clash now, possess and impel the powerful men who, it seems, are inevitably to wreck what we hopefully call our peace. We are dealing with Silesia, with the volcanic Balkan problem, with the German drive for expansion, with the curious mass of alliances which existed before the First World War. We are getting at the weak heart of the Treaty of Versailles; we are seeing Nazism arise in a country which, as a result of abortive settlement, is psychologically, economically, and militaristically prepared for it.

Into this intricate and sometimes confusing record of the forces which propelled civilization through the most shameful times in history, Miss Hutter has cast her American heroine, a vital and clear-visioned woman who, though her concept of what constitutes American democracy is apparently somewhat superficial, attempts persistently to impart it to her weak, idealistic German husband and her fanatically patriotic German daughter. Elsa Crewe von Zeiritz nourishes lovingly the concept of a unified world expressed by her father, but is frustrated on every side by that intense devotion to the Fatherland which characterizes the Germans who are her friends and family. In her stubborn pursuit of democracy she befriends the Polish peasants who work on her husband's huge estate, and it is in them that she finds the greatest outlet for her philosophical energies. Through a skilful integration of personal and political conflicts Miss Hutter manages a novel whose human issues derive strength from its political issues yet are never completely overshadowed by them.

The tremendous amount of material which she covers, however, necessitates a certain superficiality of treatment; the human issues suffer more than the political, but many significant concepts and problems are merely brushed by the tip of her pen. It is to her credit, of course, that in concentrating on Germany and what appears to be its instinctive trend toward aggressive nationalism, she has not lost sight of the world as a whole; her problem demands sweeping vision and she has developed it. But it is understandable that, even with such vision and such knowledge, she finds it impossible to embrace adequately the tremendous situation which grew steadily through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Her solution finds its expression in nothing more substantial than feeble references to the possibility of one world, and the picture is entirely one of disintegration. Perhaps the answer to our current international problems has not been found, perhaps it will never be found; if Miss Hutter meant to recommend the "American way" she should have been more lucid. What we get is, essentially, a picture of world turmoil as precipitated mainly by German politics, and a characterization of the German as an obsessed and relentless nationalist, an incorrigible menace on the civilized scene.

There are moments when Miss Hutter's writing becomes extremely awkward, when her people are not convincing, and the chances are that without the highly significant material and the special detail, she would not hold her reader very long. The conclusion to the story of Elsa does not quite hold water, and it is with the conclusion of the other greater story that we are, after all, primarily concerned. Miss Hutter has maintained a difficult balance, yet it is for the world of racial hatreds, of political strife, of insecurity as far behind and forward as the eye can see—it is for the world, rather than for Elsa—that we bite our nails. As a piece of fictional writing the book fails, and we are left, essentially, with a detailed statement of what is generally already known.

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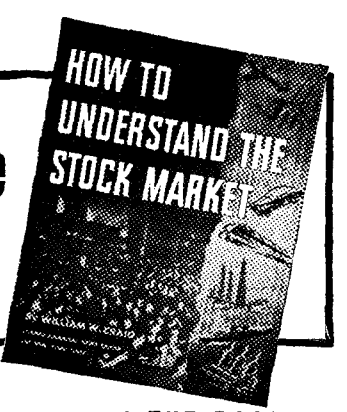

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Of *The Saturday Review of Literature*, published weekly at New York, N. Y., for October 1, 1946

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Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared J. R. Cominsky, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the Business Manager of *The Saturday Review of Literature* and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management, etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, as amended by the Act of March 3, 1933, embodied in section 537, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse of this form, to wit:

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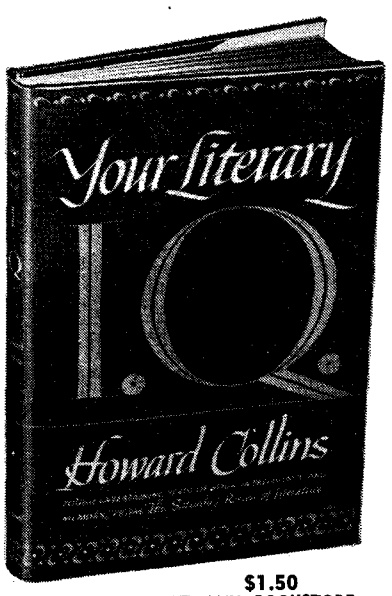

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TELEVISION

IT IS now a few weeks after Labor Day, which seems to have been sort of a vague deadline after which most people promised to find out when they could get a television set for their home, and, moreover, what they could expect in the way of programs.

There's just one more corner to round, which is news, inasmuch as television has been just around the very next corner since 1936. But this is really the last corner.

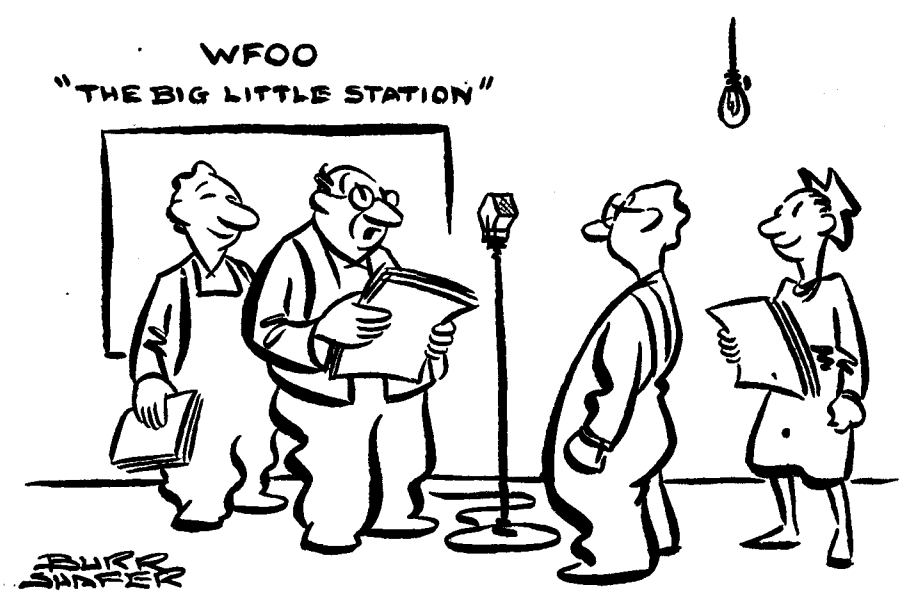
As of this month there are still only about five thousand television sets operating in Manhattan. There were only that many before the war, and these sets, in fact, are the very same sets. However, within a matter of hours, one gathers, manufacturers will have unplugged the last bottleneck in parts manufacture, and will be turning 1946 model sets out at the rate of forty to fifty thousand a month. Certainly by the first of the year, at any rate.

These sets will cost you anywhere from two hundred to two thousand dollars or so. The cheapest RCA table models will retail for about one hundred and fifty dollars, with thirty to fifty dollars more required for installation charges. They will provide an adequate means of enjoying the programs, although the viewing screen is a bit small to enable a room full of people to sit back at any distance and enjoy the show. And that particular set will be for television only. You'll still have to keep your radio and your record player handy.

At the other end of the price range stands the Allen B. Du Mont console model retailing at more than two thousand dollars. This set, though, includes a magnificent long-short-wave radio, AM and FM, and an automatic record player that can handle ten- and twelve-inch discs intermingled. The screen is large enough to give a fine picture to people seated anywhere in a large room, and the reproductions are equally visible in a lighted room or in the dark, unlike home movies. This last fact will be a source of comfort to social scientists who feared that American housewives might develop owlish characteristics from spending their days in the shadows, entranced by hour after hour of flickering entertainment.

How far out in the suburbs can a person live and still enjoy television? Forty to fifty miles. The range of television stations is regulated by law, power of transmission and height of antenna to be adjusted so that no station, except under freakish conditions, shall spill beyond that range.

What cities have television stations on the air now? New York, Chicago, Washington, Philadelphia, Schenectady, and Los Angeles have regular television service, and Du Mont, which



"The part of Melvin Douglas was played by Hermann Mertens, Laura Smith portrayed Dorothy Lamour, and Van Johnson was—"

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operates stations in New York and Washington, has plans under way to erect stations in Pittsburgh, Cleveland, and Cincinnati. In addition to those they are building for themselves, they are acting as contractors for a station in St. Louis and a station in Detroit.

Other installations are anticipated, and the FCC has granted licenses to a number of other applicants, although it remains to be seen how many of these will actually avail themselves of their privileges. The paucity of sets in operation still dictates a stringently low-priced sale of time on television, and only extremely elaborate organizations can afford to undertake the handsome loss necessary at this point, even as experimentation.

This factor is of even greater significance outside the metropolitan centers, where a number of potentially valuable community channels are now unused. In a decade or so, when every farm can have its set, these community channels will prove to be fine investments, and will guarantee that practically every city of twenty thousand or so inhabitants, with the surrounding areas, can be served by at least one station.

Will the television stations be connected by networks? Yes, but they will not depend on simultaneous broadcasts from New York or Hollywood, all the way up and down the net, for their programming. Already a co-axial cable links New York with Washington, and the A. T. & T., which owns and operates the network facility, is drafting new lines all the time. Other means of linkage are being developed, such as high frequency relay stations at close intervals. Programs are simply bounced across the country by being received by station B from station A, and simultaneously broadcast on to station C, which in turn bounces them on to station D.

Film will play a major role in effecting the simultaneity of coverage that radio networks now achieve. Film, though, will give viewers, or whatever the term will be, several advantages over radio-broadcasting. Without depending on expensive line charges, a program broadcast tonight in New York can be filmed as it is being broadcast, and the film sent to other stations throughout the country at different times. The implication is that the savings in line charges will be expended in bettering the show itself. Also, programs can be pre-filmed in order to achieve wider distribution, and, in the pre-filming, would benefit from editing and trimming. Standard Hollywood feature films, though, will not play a substantial part in the programming. Not only are they too long for commercial use, but the motion-picture people

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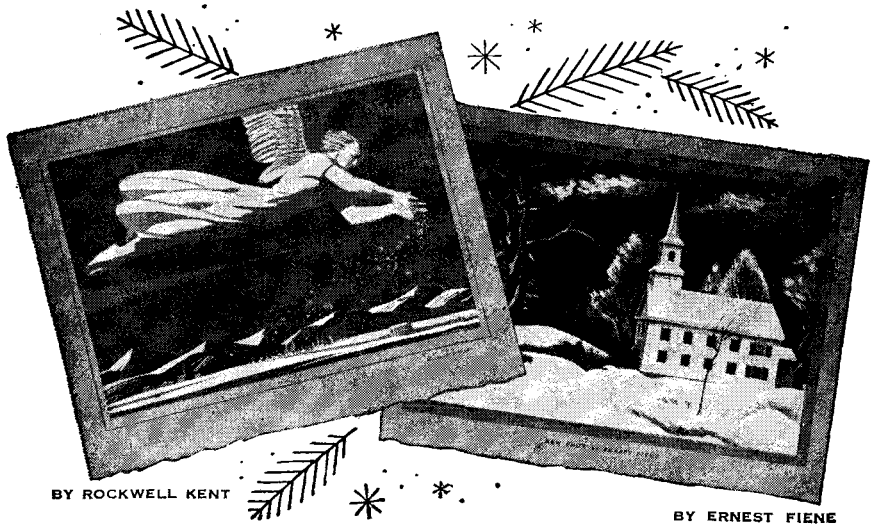

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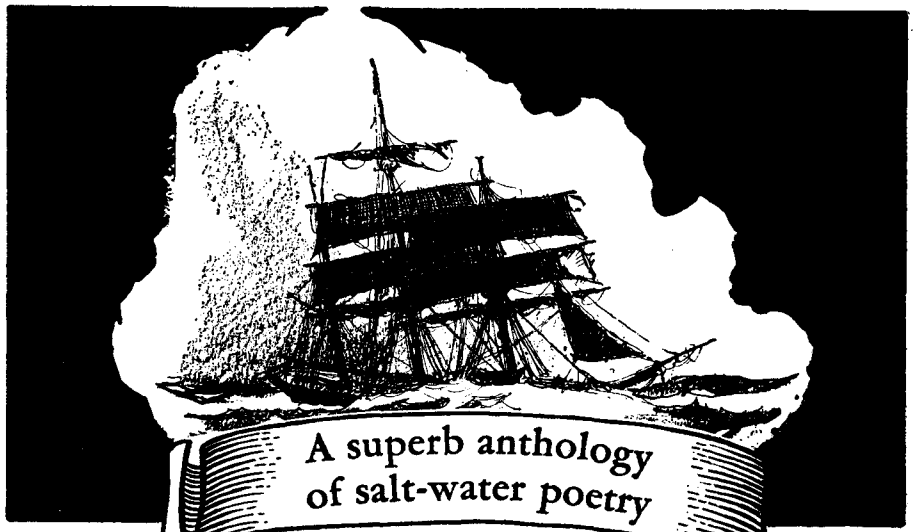
would not allow them to be used until they had exhausted their theatrical market, in order to avoid competition. Film will be especially made for television, and several firms have recently been organized for that particular purpose.

As far as programs are concerned, the medium is much further advanced than an analyst would anticipate in a situation where the public outlets have been so restricted. This is due to the fact that because so very many things are interesting to watch, using common sense, it is difficult to produce a bad show. Exhibitions of all sorts, special events from fires to fights, parades, elections, conventions, sports, all this is fare that will lift us out of the doldrums in which radio has becalmed us. With a world full of such a number of things interesting to watch, there will simply be no time for daytime serials. Unfortunately, though, audience participation programs, the bane of evening radio, will possibly blossom in television. It has been bad enough listening to people laughing at something we could not see. The only thing worse will be to find out what it is they are laughing at.

As might be expected, the most unpalatable of television programs have been adaptations of other media. The average stage play, although one might think it would lend itself to television better than to radio, suffers extremely from lack of funds. Producers simply cannot expect to devote four or five thousand dollars and two or three days of rehearsing to the creditable mounting of a play which cost thirty thousand dollars to stage originally and took six weeks for preparation. Most plays, for all the love and care which is given them by extremely professional stage people, creak and groan unbearably on television.

The medium is best geared for seeing things happen that actually happen, rather than heavily created unreality. Interviews, special events, and intelligently made film documentations on film—such will make the best television fare.

ALBERT N. WILLIAMS.



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Lonely Boy

JULE. By George Wylie Henderson. New York: Creative Age Press. 1946. 229 pp. $2.50.

Reviewed by MERLE MILLER

GEORGE WYLIE HENDERSON is a young Negro writer whose first novel, "Ollie Miss," concerned the mother of Jule, the hero of his second. Jule is a lonely, inarticulate boy, inarticulate because of his environment, lonely because he has only one friend of his own age, a white boy who is also lonely.

Most of the first half of "Jule" concerns life on a poverty-stricken farm in Alabama, the almost-too-simple life of the Negroes, Uncle Alex, a crazy little man who calls himself Dr. Mootry, and a handful of others. Naturally there is a crisis when a white man decides he wants Jule's girl, Bertha Mae.

Then, quite suddenly, Jule is in Harlem, looking for a job. Exactly how he got there or why he came to New York instead of, say, Memphis or Atlanta is never quite clear. What happens later is orthodox enough. Jule gets a job, and he is, of course, beset with the temptations of a big city, drinking and smoking and women. When he falls in love, it is with the wrong woman, and when he discovers his mistake, he turns to drink. Finally he returns to his home in Alabama for his mother's funeral. But he will go back to New York because "Got to go back. Got something to do. Got something I got to do."

Mr. Henderson has, I imagine, tried to tell his own story, and, once in a rare while, he does it well.

But, over all, Mr. Henderson's story, characters, dialogue, and plot are distressingly naive and unfortunately one-dimensional. This novel cannot be compared for example, with Richard Wright's "Native Son."

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FIFTY GUIDES TO AMERICAN CIVILIZATION

(*Continued from page 16*)

raphy." The American notion that industry and frugality will bring talent to fruition. Still the most enduring statement of this assumption.

40. Thomas Jefferson, "Writings." Jefferson's general position embodies the "American dream." The difficulty is to find in his diffuse work what is central. A good body of selections, like that in the Modern Library, is the best approach.
41. Alexander Hamilton, "Report on Manufactures." You can trace the whole attitude of conservative American business to this classic document.
42. Abraham Lincoln, "Speeches." The best emotional statement of what the Americans believe themselves to be.
43. Henry George, "Progress and Poverty." The cautious quality of most American "radical" or "reform" literature is embodied in Henry George, important for its concern with land; its optimistic denial of Malthusianism; the specious simplicity of its economic thinking; and its rosy picture of the future.
44. Thorstein Veblen, "The Theory of the Leisure Class." The tough-minded comment of a Scandinavian upon the rosy dreams of American social democracy. It illustrates the confused American admiration of keeping your feet on the ground; *i.e.*, being hard-headed.
45. Jonathan Edwards, "Essay on the Freedom of the Will." Nobody but specialists reads this, the only theological masterpiece written by an American. Nevertheless, its ambivalent mingling of freedom and determinism is central to the American position.
46. William James, "Pragmatism." In the nineteenth century, Scotch realism was the official metaphysics. Unfortunately it produced no single classic statement. In the twentieth century James is *par excellence* the American philosopher, preceding Dewey and others.
47. Vannevar Bush, "Science, the Endless Frontier." This document is more than a government report; it summates American belief in science as a cure, as a philosophy, as a proof of "progress."
48. Mark Twain, "The Mysterious Stranger." The inarticulate pessimism of the American spirit, counterpart to scientific optimism, is best expressed in this imperfect but nonetheless powerful book.
49. Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Essays." But then, pessimism is not all-powerful; and the insistence that cheerfulness is central to life is best imaginatively presented in these essays.
50. Constance Rourke, "American Humor." To know a people, learn what it laughs at.

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SONGS OF RACHMANINOFF. Jennie Tourel; Erich Itor Kahn, pf. Columbia M 625 (3) $3.85	Piano could be stronger in the balance.	A	If you are about to buy the 2nd piano concerto—try this instead. Take 'em one or two at a time. Tourel (in Russian) does an accurate, expressive job. Kahn too.
BEETHOVEN, QUINTET in C OP 29. Budapest Quartet, M. Katims, viola. Columbia M 623 (4) $4.85	Something wrong in the recording: tone is pinched, especially violins. Yet fidelity is greater than older Budapests. Room acoustics?	A—	An important early-middle period work, not often enough heard. Performance not as secure as most Budapest renditions.

MAKING YOUR OWN — II

ASIDE from lower cost there are two great advantages to the unit system phonograph, in which each major section of your equipment—turntable and pick-up, amplifier, and speaker—is a separate unit. The first is adaptability, as simple furniture, and from the point of view of room acoustics. With each unit free to move except for connecting wires, you may distribute your phonograph around the room, hiding the amplifier behind or under or in something (but watch out for over-heating), placing the turntable and its pick-up handily next to an arm chair, and best of all, locating the speaker far from your own center of operations, at a point which best suits the acoustical and decorative needs of your room.

The speaker must be mounted if it is to bring you the low tones. You may fasten it in a hole in a door or some piece of furniture or even mount it in the wall itself; but, better, set it in a movable piece of wall board (the bigger, the better results) or in its own cabinet, elaborate or simple as you wish. If you use wall board throw a decorative spread over it. Try placing the speaker unit V-wise, in a corner of the room, using the walls as a reflecting "horn." You can get deep bass response by mounting it in an unused fireplace; but the chimney may send your music where it's not wanted.

Sometimes mounting the speaker facing straight up, behind a convenient corner screen, gives a fine diffusion of sound. In any case it is wise to place some diffusing article of furniture between you and the direct blast of the speaker itself. One good way is to put it behind a table, with chairs about, and a dangling spread across the top. You will be surprised at the marked differences in quality you will get by experimenting along these lines.

The second advantage of the unit system is its replaceability—piece by piece. When you trade in your all-in-one combination you sacrifice plenty of perfectly good material which you may be sure is turned to profit by someone else. With the unit system you may replace each section with newer or better equipment, keeping yourself up to date on the instalment plan. And you will quickly discover that this is a tremendous source of interest, as you try different combinations of old and new equipment and note the effects, uncover the weak links in your chain. You may well afford to buy considerably better quality equipment than is standard in medium price phonographs, notably in the speaker and pick-up departments. When FM gets started, and wire recording hits the gadget market, you can add these and other units without blowing yourself to a super-duper combination at a staggering price.

A good way to make a modest beginning, especially if you own a "sit down" phonograph, is to get its speaker out of the cabinet and into a piece of wall board. You will be amazed at the improvement in quality just this change will give. Later you may move the turntable and pick-up into their own box, or acquire a new unit, leaving only the radio and amplifier. Eventually you may want to move these too—completing the conversion. From then on you are on your own.

EDWARD TATNALL CANBY.

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(*Continued from page 21*)

Brace), first president of Johns Hopkins, the man whose vision and ability shaped the institution which for years had not its like in America.

★ ★

Even a public that perhaps knows little of the more local issues of the great journalist's time will find much of high interest in Henry Luther Stoddard's life of Horace Greeley (Putnam). Something of the enormous influence the man had over his day carries over from this portrayal of his public and private life.

★ ★

Lionel Stevenson's "The Showman of Vanity Fair" (Scribners) should prove of great interest not only to those who are well-read in Thackeray and Thackeray biography but also to those who are less familiar with the great Victorian. A broad and comprehensive life.

Students of American history will be glad to know that there is shortly to be available "The Selected Writings of John and John Quincy Adams" (Knopf), edited by Adrienne Koch and William Peden.

★ ★

There's a new volume in the Rivers of America Series, "The Tennessee" (Rinehart), by Donald Davidson.

★ ★

And Louise Dickinson Rich, who delighted lovers of the Maine woods and followers of the simple life in general with "We Took to the Woods," recounts further experiences in her sylvan retreat in "Happy the Land" (Lippincott).

November

John Marquand has deserted Boston and taken this time a woman instead of a man as principal character in his new novel, "B. F.'s Daughter" (Little, Brown). This picture of life in our times, when the problems of the world impinge on and complicate the problems of the individual, is marked by the admirable craftsmanship which is always Mr. Marquand's.

★ ★

Robert Graves, who has proved his ability in earlier books to take a familiar personality or episode of history and give it the color of his own mind and imagination, in "King Jesus" (Creative Age) presents a learned and unorthodox but vividly interesting account of the life of Christ.

★ ★

Another novel of Biblical days is "Barabbas" (Prentice-Hall), by Emery Bekessy and Andreas Hemberger. There are interesting parallels in this tale to be discovered between the insurrectionist and underground movement which the authors depict their hero as leading and similar movements in the Europe of the war years.

Talking of the war, there's a book by a young poet turned novelist, Alfred Hayes, which is a remarkable performance. "All Thy Conquests" (Howell, Soskin) is hardly a novel in the accepted sense, but rather a series of episodes of occupied Italy held together on the chain of the trial of the fascist Caruso. The book is grim, bitter, and brilliant, and is an unforgettable portrayal of the demoralization that beset conquered and conqueror alike.

★ ★

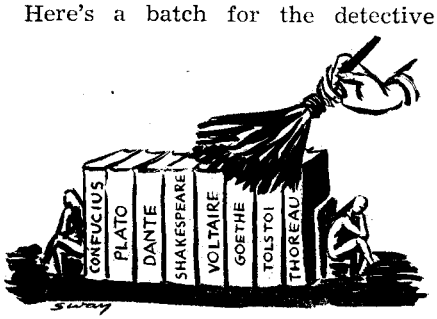
To turn to fiction in lighter vein, there's a story by Mary O'Hara, "Green Grass of Wyoming" (Lippincott), which reintroduces the personalities of "My Friend Flicka" and "Thunderhead" and of course again has a horse for central interest; there's a new Claudia tale by Rose Franken, "Young Claudia" (Rinehart), which brings the heroine's husband home from the war to a life of which she has quietly assumed the regulation; and there's a most amusing and entertaining story of a talking mule of the Army whose experience had made him familiar with all sorts of military matters and whose advice and counsel led the officers and men with whom he came in contact into all sorts of predicaments. Its name—and the name of the mule—is "Francis" (Farrar & Strauss), and it's by David Stern.

★ ★

Two volumes of short stories stand out by reason of their authorship, "The Last Circle," by Stephen Vincent Benét (Farrar & Strauss), in which interspersed amongst the excellent tales is some of his characteristically lovely poetry, and "The Gipsy's Baby" (Reynal & Hitchcock), by Rosamond Lehmann.

★ ★

Here's a batch for the detective



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story fan: "Fear No More" (Simon & Schuster), by Lesley Edgley; "Museum Piece" No. 13 (Doubleday), by Rufus King, "The Hollow," (Dodd, Mead), by Agatha Christie, "Trouble Follows Me" (Dodd, Mead), by Kenneth Miller.

★ ★

Katherine Tupper Marshall, wife of the Army's wartime Chief of Staff, in a biography of her husband entitled "Together: Annals of an Army Wife" (Tupper & Love) has accomplished the difficult feat of writing an intimate chronicle that is always in admirable taste. From her portrayal there emerges not only the great military figure that General Marshall is universally acknowledged to be but a man as remarkable for character as for his attainments. A truly great personality.

★ ★

The "war" that up to 1914 meant only the Civil War to Americans gets interesting description in "Letters from Lee's Army" (Scribners), by Captain Charles Minor Blackford III. Like his brother, whose "War Years with Jeb Stuart" was published last year, Captain Blackford wrote fully about his experiences, and this selection from his own letters and those of his wife is full of interest. Those who complain of the cost of living today will discover here that the Confederacy knew similar difficulty. Specially interesting in this book is its portrayal of Stonewall Jackson.

★ ★

Another work bearing on the Civil War period which will have interest, especially for students of history, is Burton J. Hendrick's "Lincoln's War Cabinet" (Little, Brown).

★ ★

The wide public which delighted years ago when it first appeared in "Theodore Roosevelt's Letters to His Children" will rejoice to know that a volume of similar correspondence, "Letters to Kermit from Theodore Roosevelt" (Scribners), reflects the same devotion to family, ranging interest, and dynamic personality as did the first.

★ ★

A long and very terrible book in the misery it portrays, but a striking volume for all its grimness, is "The Forging of a Rebel" (Reynal & Hitchcock), by Arturo Berea. This is the autobiography of a Spanish patriot, a man reared in suffering and poverty who went through the hell of the Spanish Civil War to have his hopes and idealism end in the triumph of Franco.

Anyone who has read Edward Ellsberg's earlier books will know that when the Commander describes the salvage operations which recovered the ships sunk by the enemy at Massawa there is in store for him in "Under the Red Sea" (Dodd, Mead) as fascinating a story of adventure as any that fiction could write.

★ ★

In "Scientists Against Time" (Little, Brown) James Phinney Baxter presents an excellent survey of the contribution of science to warfare, reviewing the achievements of radar, rockets, landing craft, etc., all of them the outcome of research carried on by the foremost scientists of the world with a knowledge and devotion little short of marvelous.

★ ★

Ellis Gibbs Arnell, the young and courageous reform Governor of Georgia, who unfortunately because of a state law which prevents the chief executive from succeeding himself is shortly to yield office to Talmadge, has written an autobiographical chronicle which is interesting throughout and especially so in his report of his political stewardship and his observations on affairs and issues. A book which should prove absorbing to a national and not merely a local public.

Anyone interested in the functioning of the American system will find much food for thought in Granville Hicks's portrayal of a "Small Town" (Macmillan), in which he enters into all phases of its activities and social make-up.

★ ★

The railroad fan is offered two books of special appeal to his hobby in Edward Hungerford's "Men of Erie" (Random), a history of the checkered career of that railroad which in its early years wrote a dramatic episode in our annals in the bitter fight which was carried on by those picturesque pirates Jay Gould, Jim Fisk, and Daniel Drew against Cornelius Vanderbilt, and "Railroading for the Rear End" (Coward-McCann), a sort of handbook on manifests, which to you and me means freight trains.

★ ★

There's an excellent biography of Frederick Douglas, the famous fugitive slave who rose to play an important part in the Abolition movement, in Edmund Fuller's "A Star Pointed North" (Harpers).

★ ★

Herman Kesten's "Ferdinand and Isabella" (Creative Age) calls itself a novel, but it is so much history that it can fall under either classification.

★ ★

Frederic F. Van de Water, who should know the Vermont side of Lake Champlain not only from study but from personal experience, writes a history of it and Lake George (Bobbs-Merrill) which should interest all lovers of the North Woods as well as students of the past.

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PORTRAIT OF A MISANTHROPE

(Continued from page 13)

which human life was valued. Bret Harte made lawlessness picturesque and Mark Twain made it humorous. Bierce saw it, though without indignation, for what it was—murder.)

Most of Bierce's other stories turn upon either the theme of the supernatural or on the humor of horror. In these fields he produced several masterpieces and considerable tripe.

It is pertinent that Bierce, who disliked human beings and scoffed at social relationships, should have written so much and on the whole so well about ghosts, apparitions, revenants, were-dogs, animate machines, extra-sensory perception, and action at a distance. It is as though the man's inability to stomach the real world forced him to try to establish citizenship in the country of the occult. (Yet Bierce is no Algernon Blackwood or Arthur Machen, no sensitive in search of "escape." He led a busy life, full of the usual struggle and conflict; there is little of the shrinking esthete about him.) Rather must we think of his interest (not necessarily his belief) in the supernatural as part and parcel of his general misanthropy. He was so obsessed by the horror of real life that he had to call in the aid of another dimension in order to express it. He seems to be saying to us: "You do not have enough sense to shudder at yourselves: by God, I will make you shudder then at spirits which are but yourselves upon another plane! If I cannot make you shrink from life, I will make you shrink from its goal and culmination —death!" Bierce's morbidity is too controlled to have about it any touch of the insane; it merely expresses his fury at our placid healthiness. "*N'importe où, hors du monde.*" It is this emotional drive behind his most calculated horrors that makes him much more than an American Monk Lewis. His Gothicism is no hothouse flower but a monstrous orchid. (When he tries to write in the traditional Gothic vein, as in "The Monk and the Hangman's Daughter," he is unconvincing, for he is not using his own voice.

Among the stories of the impossible that the reader may wish to note with extra care are "The Death of Halpin Frayser," with its extraordinary utilization of what is now called the Oedipus Complex; "One Summer Night," a trifle which packs into five hundred words a heavy weight of horror; "Moxon's Master," which inverts La Mettrie's doctrine of man considered as a machine, and which may possibly have been suggested by Poe's wonderful account of Maelzel's Chess-player; "A Resumed Identity," reflecting Bierce's obsession with the problem of lost, split, or wandering consciousness; "The Damned Thing," a masterpiece in a genre in which Bierce has since been equalled only by H. G. Wells; and "Harta the Shepherd," a grave and bitter fable, almost worthy of Poe, expressing the idea—so true and so continually rejected by men—that to seek happiness is to lose it.

Bierce's morbidity was exceptionally fertile—he made it produce humor as well as chills. I should say that in this extremely narrow field of the sardonic, of the ludicrous ghost story and the comical murder, he is unrivaled. He begins by somehow making you accept his basic premise: death is a joke. The rest is deadpan elaboration, with the deadpan occasionally relieved by the rictus of a ghoul trying to laugh. Perhaps the two best examples are "My Favorite Murder" and "Oil of Dog" (the latter I cannot recommend to the queasy-stomached). "My Favorite Murder" really creates a new shudder, a shudder in which laughter is grotesquely mingled. It is outrageous, it is frightening—it is funny. One

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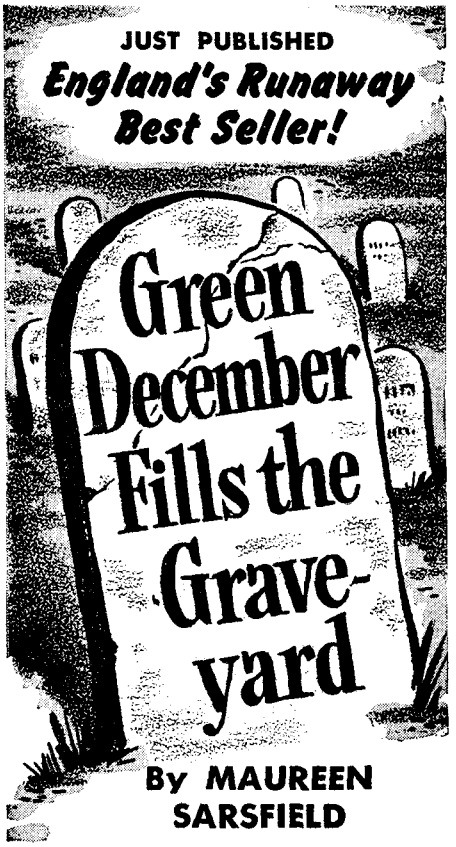

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finishes it in thorough agreement with the narrator that "in point of artistic atrocity" the murder of Uncle William has seldom been excelled. The humor of the unbelievable "Oil of Dog" depends on a careful, indeed beautiful use of ironical understatement, and the exhaustiveness of the technique whereby the macabre is pushed to such an extreme that it falls somehow into the gulf of laughter. One will not easily forget Mr. Boffer Bing's mother, who had "a small studio in the shadow of the village church, where she disposed of unwelcome babes." The choice of the word "studio" is one of the happiest thoughts of the unhappy Bierce.

A minor offshoot of Bierce's mastery of the grotesque is the twist he gives to the Western "tall tale." In "Curried Cow," for example, he imparts to it a touch of the gruesome which in its origins it never possessed. He makes a new thing of it.

The nuclear Bierce is to be found in the "Fantastic Fables." One should not read more than a dozen of them at a time, just as one should not read more than a dozen jokes at a time. Their quality lies in their ferocious concentration of extra-double-distilled essential oil of misanthropy. They are so condensed that they take your breath away.

The theme is always the same: mankind is a scoundrel; but the changes rung upon the theme demonstrate an almost abnormal inventiveness. They have no humor—they do not resemble at all, for instance, the fables of George Ade. They have wit but little fancy, they are undecorated, and sting painfully. The brutal Bierce allows no exceptions. He aims to make mincemeat of all civilized humanity — lawyers and weather forecasters, doctors and detectives, widows and photographers, editors and insurance agents, anarchists and female journalists, men and women.

Bierce is not, of course, a great writer. It may even be argued that he is not a good writer, for he has painful faults of vulgarity and cheapness of imagination. But at his best he is like no one else. He had, for example, a mastery of pared phrasing equalled in our time perhaps only by Wilde and Shaw. When he defines marriage as "the state or condition of a community consisting of a master, a mistress and two slaves, making in all, two" he is saying something that many other unhappy men and women have said—but he is saying it in a way impossible to improve or forget.

His style, for one thing, will preserve him, though for how long no one would care to say; and the purity of his misanthropy, too, will help to keep him alive. It is good that literature should be so catholic and wide-wayed that it affords scope to every emotion and attitude, even the unloveliest. It is fitting that someone should be born and live and die dedicated to the expression of bitterness. For bitterness is a mood that comes to all intelligent men, though, as they are intelligent, only intermittently. It is proper that there should be at least one man able to give penetrating expression to that mood. Bierce is such a man—limited, wrong-headed, unbalanced, but, in his own constricted way, an artist. He will remain one of the most interesting and eccentric figures in our literature, one of our great wits, one of our most uncompromising satirists, the perfection of two or three new, if minor, genres: a writer one cannot casually pass by.

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BALLADE OF THE MIDDLEBROW

The only type of critic who can feel completely at ease today is the "middlebrow," who, semi-literate himself, communicates naturally with his semi-literate audience.

Francis C. Golffing in *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse.*

THE critics snoot and snort and sneer.
They're arrogant and hard.
They heartily amuse this here—
For I'm a middlebard.
No longer may I swim the weir,
No longer golfing go;
I'll be a middlebrow, my dear,
Between the high and low.

I'm fond of every kind of cheer,
Of frankincense and nard,
Of Scotch and Irish, ale and beer.
My life is not ill-starred.
The high-brows spin upon their ear,
The low-brows? They're so-so.
But I'm a middlebrow, my dear,
Between the high and low.

For Robert Browning I can cheer,
I feel John Keats a pard,
And Geoffrey Chaucer's chaunteclere
I would not disregard.
An era of atomic fear
For Pope I would forego.
I'm just a middlebrow, my dear,
Between the high and low.

ENVOY

Princess, the highbrows are too queer;
The lowbrows much to slow;
So I'm a middlebrow, my dear,
Between the high and low.

* * *

I am always glad to mention Wendell Goodwin of Famous Circus Features who now tells me he has recently started a column in the morning *Trentonian* of Trenton, N. J., a column devoted exclusively to the circus. Some of his material will contain the true facts concerning the WPA Federal Theatre circus which caused so much discussion on the floors of Congress several years ago. Mr. Goodwin implies that Henry Mencken hasn't sufficiently investigated circus language; he says that at least sixty percent of American slang phrases originate in the circus. He also says that one of Barnum's original clowns, now 97 years old, is appearing with Cuban Mack's Circus Side Show; and, in all modesty, he uses the following quotation from Robert W. Service concerning his own writing:

I have no doubt that the Devil grins
At the seas of ink I spatter.
Ye Gods forgive my literary sins!
The other kind don't matter.

* * *

The best "Hecate County" story I know is the following: A lady for whom I have the deepest respect borrowed the book from me. I intimated that perhaps her delightful and charming young daughter might not be helped particularly by the perusal of certain passages in it. Later on the lady returned the book to me. What she thought of it is not the point. But she said, "I am very sorry, but the jacket has been lost. You see I thought perhaps Cornelia might pick up the book, and so I put another jacket on it, while I was reading it." I said, Oh, of course that was all right; but when I came to look at the book in the jacket in which it was still enveloped, I found that the jacket read:

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My friend had substituted the jacket of a well-known and popular work by Dr. Harold Fink. A pendant to the story is that the young lady asked

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her mother what had become of that book that I had said she ought not to read (an incomplete variant of my actual words). "Because," she said, "I've already read parts of it." "Parts of it!" exclaimed her parent, "What parts?" "Oh, only 'The Princess with the Golden Hair,'" said the blithe young lady, "and, really, mother, only the interesting parts of that!"

* * *

I thank Mr. Edward W. Lawson of St. Augustine, Florida, for having given me the following information concerning an ancestor. My brother always contended that there was also a Black Pedro Benét who was an admirable pirate. I do not know whether the gentleman mentioned below was the one I have heard was assassinated in Havana, but I wish I knew who won the fight.

> Do you know of Captain Don Pedro Benét who fought two English frigates off the coast of Cuba in 1798? If I have the genealogy correct he was your great-grandfather's uncle. The official documents of this memorable battle were published in a bulletin of the Cuban Archives (*Boletin del Archivo Nacional*, la Habana, 1943; Tomo XL, Enero-Diciembre 1941, pp. 62-90) from which I translate the title:
>
> "Testimony of the actions taken by the Most Excellent Señor Governor and Captain General of this Plaza and Island on the Combat which our Gunboat named Our Lady of Carmen, its Captain Don Pedro Benét, had on the windward coast of the inlet of Bocaciega with two English Frigates of War."
>
> It was a real fight and all the details are given by several witnesses. Probably a copy of the Boletin is available in the New York Public Library.

Mr. Lawson, whose address is 21 Joiner Street, St. Augustine, has written a book which sounds to me very interesting. He says of it:

> My book is "The Discovery of Florida and its Discoverer Juan Ponce de Leon," which I published and am distributing myself. It is a documented brief biography of Juan Ponce and an equally documented consideration of his two voyages to Florida. There is a reconstruction of his first voyage in which modern hydrographic knowledge and standard navigational methods are applied to determine the point at which he first landed on the Florida coast. The bibliography gives standard Spanish and English references and in addition a list of documents in the Spanish archives with translations of the titles. In the appendix are the Spanish texts and translations of those documents related to the discovery of Florida. Much of this information has not been previouly published. Here all of it is brought together chronologically for the first time.

. . . And so, enough for now.

WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT.

PERSONALS

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DOUBLE-CROSTIC NO. 655

By Elizabeth S. Kingsley

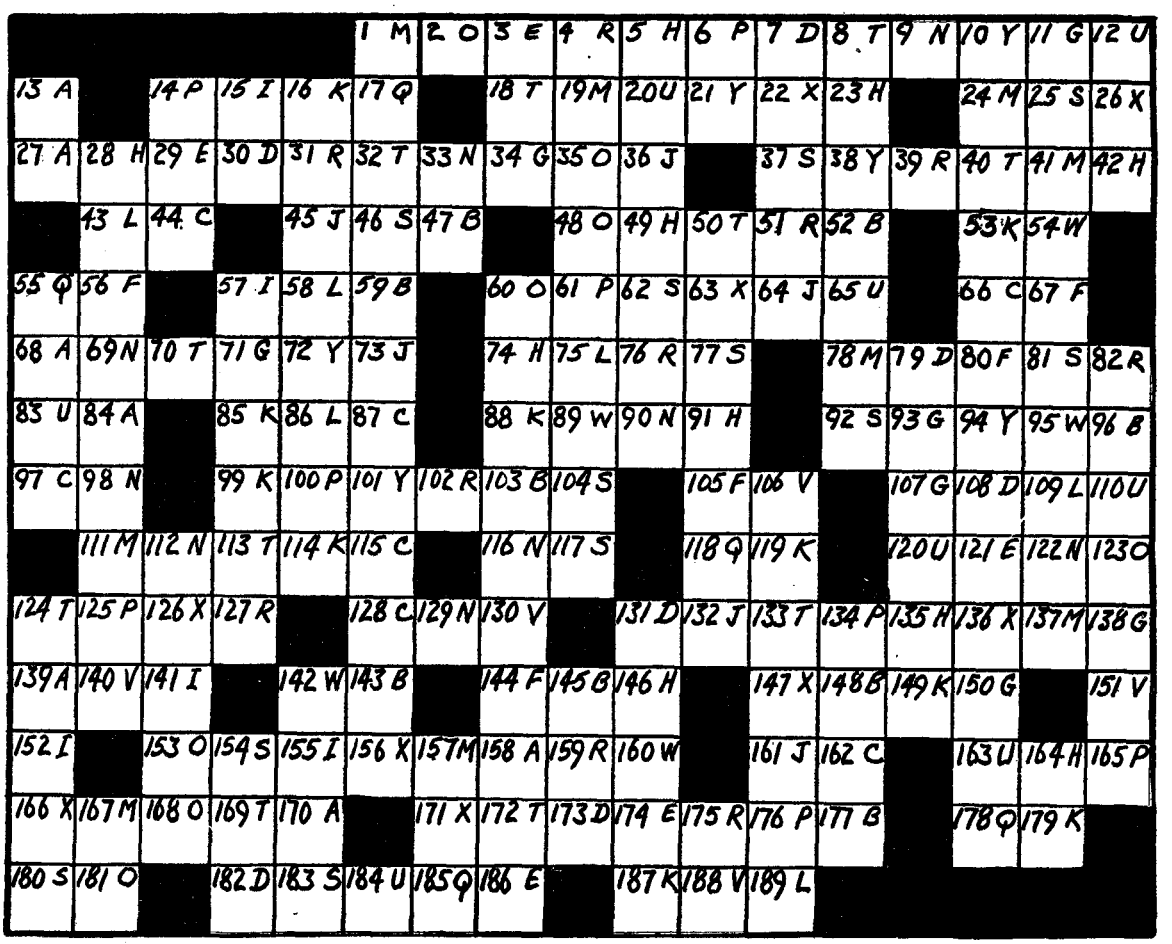
DEFINITIONS	WORDS
A. English novelist noted for portrayals of effect of poverty on character (1857-1903).	68 158 13 84 139 170 27
B. Deeds; exploits (Latin; 2 wds.)	103 47 177 96 59 52 143 145 148
C. Like a gland; full of glands.	128 87 115 162 66 44 97
D. *Improvises; imitates* (2 wds.)	108 131 7 30 182 173 79
E. Forest background of "As You Like It."	174 121 3 29 186
F. Inclined to take offense (Slang).	144 105 80 67 56
G. English essayist, novelist, and poet (1861-1923).	93 34 71 150 11 107 138
H. American author and editor of anthologies (1885-)	135 91 74 49 28 164 5 146 23 42
I. Tending toward an end; purposive.	57 152 141 15 155
J. Real; material; practical.	45 73 161 132 64 36
K. Jesters; buffoons.	99 187 149 53 16 85 114 119 88 179
L. King of the Ammonites and enemy of Saul (Bib.)	86 109 58 43 189 75
M. Deformed.	1 167 111 157 19 78 24 41 137

DEFINITIONS	WORDS
N. Being kept for future use (2 wds.)	116 129 9 122 98 90 69 33 112
O. *Pertaining to a poetic foot* of three syllables, one long, two short.	153 123 60 181 48 35 2 168
P. American painter and etcher (Paris and London; 1834-1903).	14 61 125 6 100 134 165 176
Q. Eldest brother of David, later chief of the tribe of Judah (Bib.)	185 17 118 178 55
R. Functioned in military life in time of war (2 wds.)	39 76 4 31 127 51 159 175 82 102
S. A record of telephone calls in an office, exchange, hotel, etc. (2 wds.)	117 25 62 37 183 180 92 104 46 81 154 77
T. False display.	169 133 172 8 18 40 50 124 32 70 113
U. Dissertation; essay, as Milton's "On Education."	83 12 163 120 184 20 110 65
V. Eldest son of Aaron and Elisheba, struck dead for kindling incense with "strange" fire (Bib.)	106 188 130 140 151
W. Sheeplike.	54 89 142 95 160
X. Subjugating or restraining by wonder or fear.	26 126 136 166 171 147 156 63 22
Y. Hebrew prophet in reign of David (Bib.)	10 94 72 101 38 21

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-odd words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square of the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Read up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (second edition).



Solution of last week's Double-Crostic will be found on page 14 of this issue.

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By JOHN HERSEY

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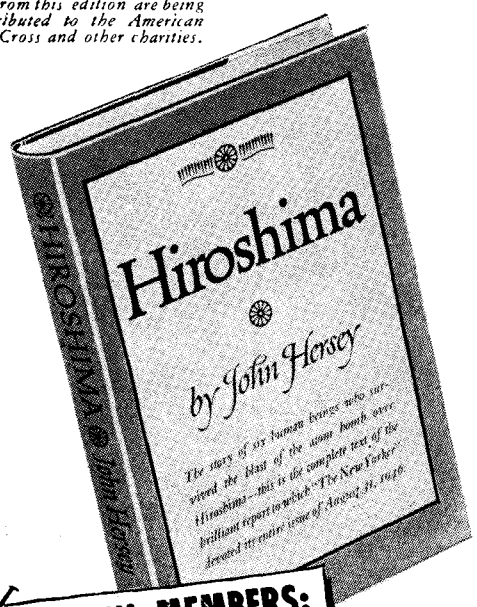

JOHN HERSEY

On August 31 the editors of *The New Yorker*, notoriously a hardboiled group, cancelled all the usual features in their magazine, and devoted the entire issue to a single article some 30,000 words long.

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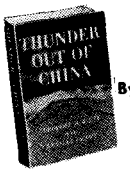

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